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ABSTRACT

Produced using a Macintosh Plus and LaserWriter Printer, these journals present articles relating to word processing in the classroom. Articles and their authors for the November/December 1986 issue include: "Computer Assisted Instruction: Western Europe" (Owen and Irene Thomas); "FrEd Writing" (B. Fleury); "Writing Up a Storm: An Activity for 'The Writing Workshop'"; "Writing with the Turtle" (J. Bachman); "Keyboarding--An Interview with Keith Wetzel"; "Keyboarding Issues and Concerns" (K. Jostad and J. Madian); "Show Business" (S. Marcus); "The Computer, Cooperative Learning & the California Writing Project" (A. C. Allen); "Writing Skills with 'Write On!'" (J. Madian); "A Scope and Sequence for Story Writing, Part 1" (J. Madian); "Poetry and Cooperative Learning, Part 2"; "CWP on the College Campus" (A. Auten); "Hazelwood West Writing Lab" (A. Wright); "Cooperative Learning: Using the Jigsaw Technique To Learn 'AppleWorks'"; "Encouraging Writing in Grades 4-8"; "Group Role Evaluation Sheet"; and "A Review of 'Show Time'--MECC's New Play-Writing Tool" (S. Keran). Articles and their authors for the January/February 1987 issue include: "FrEd Writing: Computer Organized Writing" (B. Fleury); "Multischool Electronic Newspaper" (C. Peck); "Five Language Acquisition Strategies for Limited English and Language Disabled Students" (J. Madian); "Save a File" (J. Piper); "A Survey of Elementary Students' Attitudes toward Word Processing" (K. Wetzel); "A Scope and Sequence for Story Writing, Part 2" (S. Franklin and J. Madian); "Writing on the College Campus" (A. Auten); "Rewriting--Using the Best of Both Worlds" (L. Lewin); and "Style Checkers: Good News and Bad News" (S. Marcus). Articles and their authors for the April/May issue, focusing on writing across the curriculum, include: "The AustraAlaskan Project" (J. Erwin); "Computers, Education, and the UK--Reflections on a Visit with Daniel Chandler" (I. D. Thomas); "Five Helpful Tips for Teachers Who Create Their Own Composition Materials" (T. Knight); "Write To Think: Teaching about Social Conflict through Imaginative Writing" (B. Bigelow and L. Christiansen); "Writing in the Media Center" (S. Franklin); "How Do I Know What They Think Until I Hear Them Say It?" (S. Boyarsky); "Data Bases 'R Us" (S. Marcus); "Connecting Literature with Writing at the Intermediate and Secondary Level" (K. Jostad); "The Writer Emeritus Project" (L. Madian and B. Fleury); "Vctr Voweless" (M. Kozikowski); "Inspiring Poetry" (J. Madian); "The Mayflower Passenger List" (D. Ardizzone); and "The Writing Family Project" (B. Fleury). (MM)

THE Writing NOTEBOOK

November/December 1986

Creative Word Processing in the Classroom

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
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Who's Who

Here are just some of the interests of **CWP** during the coming year. All of the people listed below are supporting **CWP** this year as members of the **CWP Editorial Advisory Board**, and many of them as contributing editors/networkers on specific topics.

Our profound thanks to each of these people. And we encourage you, as readers of **CWP**, to support topics of interest to you by sending in *your* ideas, articles and activities!

WORDS AROUND THE WORLD: THE WRITING PROCESS, KIDS' PUBLISHING & BOOKNET
Peter Anderson. Peter is a creative writing and composition teacher in Sharon, VT. He recently travelled around the U.S. and Europe in his van, finding out what's happening with word processing and language arts instruction.

COMPUTER-SUPPORTED LANGUAGE ARTS ON THE COLLEGE CAMPUS
Anne Auten. Former language arts software designer for MECC, and Coordinator of User Services for the ERIC Clearinghouse on Reading and Communication Skills for NCTE. Anne holds a joint appointment in Graduate Education and Computer Science at the College of St. Thomas, St. Paul, MN.

LOGOWRITING
Judy Bachman. As Elementary Computer Coordinator for the Ladue, MO, School District, Judy's curriculum and staff development efforts focus on word processing, Logo, and the use of data bases to promote higher level thinking skills.

Gerald H. Block, Editor of *CRLA Journal* from 1982–85; Conference Coordinator, Educational Computing Conferences; Executive Director, A Learning Place, Berkeley and Oakland, CA.

FrEdWRITING
Bruce Fleury. Father of FrEdWriter and Computer Organized Writing. Mentor Teacher, Magnolia Elementary School, El Cajon, CA.

WRITE-ON! DATA DISKETTES TO IMPROVE WRITING SKILLS
Karen Jostad. Former Manager, Software Design Group at MECC, and now President of Humanities Software, Cerritos, CA.

SOFTWARE REVIEWS
Karen Jostad and Shirley Keran.

WRITING ACROSS THE CURRICULUM
Shirley Keran. Formerly a software designer for MECC, Shirley is now a freelance software designer and consultant, and member NCTE Committee on Instructional Technology.

EDITING
Larry Lewin. Larry teaches eighth grade language arts at Monroe Middle School in Eugene, OR. He conducts workshops on composition and computers and has co-authored textbooks on composition instruction.

Stephen Marcus. Associate Director, South Coast Writing Project, University of California, Santa Barbara.

WORD PROCESSOR-SUPPORTED READING INSTRUCTION
Michael Milone, Jr. Founder and President, American Research and Development Group, Honesdale, PA.

Henry Olds. Applications Development Manager for Learningways, Inc., and Senior Advisor, *Classroom Computer Learning*. Henry's main interest is in exploring new applications of the computer in promoting the curriculum.

ELECTRONIC NEWSPAPERS
Craig Peck. Principal, Stowers Elementary School, Cerritos, CA.

EXTENDED LEARNING PROJECTS
Tim Riordon. Tim is a teacher in Eugene, OR. His current interests include writing across the curriculum, especially as a part of extended learning projects.

Irene and Owen Thomas.
Owen Thomas is a Professor of Education, Literature and Linguistics, University of California, Irvine, and co-director of the UC Irvine Writing Project. Irene Thomas is also an educator and language arts consultant, and a charter member of NCTE's Committee on Educational Technology. Together the Thomases authored and designed The Writing Workshop.

KEYBOARDING
Keith Wetzel. A former elementary and middle school teacher, Keith is now Workshop Coordinator for the Center for Advanced Technology in Education, University of Oregon. He has conducted research on teaching writing and word processing to students grades 3–5. ■

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INTEGRATING INSTRUCTION, COMPUTERS, AND STAFF DEVELOPMENT

As we decide how to improve instruction, the place of computers, and what kinds of staff development are worthwhile, we would do well to consider how to combine these three areas.

Current wisdom states that improved instructional practices will occur only where site principals and teachers are given support for taking the initiative in instructional design. There is no new instructional package, be it software- or textbook-based, that will revitalize education.

Educational reform requires going back to the basic questions. Who is the student with regard to interests and learning style? What is the nature of the knowledge and skills that are appropriate for that student? What are the key concepts and the aesthetic principles around which the knowledge is organized? How can the ideas best be learned? What other knowledge is related by facts, history, methods of inquiry, or metaphor? How can skills be developed while gaining and refining understanding and application?

To achieve the best fit between content and students, we need to understand how to use the humanities, and particularly literature, as a vehicle around which an enriched instructional process can evolve. We need to discover how to use the humanities as a basis for integrating all curriculum areas, and particularly reading and writing.

Educational theory, teaching methods, technology, and a surfeit of materials (print, video, and software) enable educators to provide inspired education for their students. The problem is not so much that we need to design new materials; rather, it is that we need to learn how to select, coordinate, and use existing resources. This coordination can be greatly facilitated by using the word processor as a curriculum design and storage tool.

The tremendous flexibility of computers for instruction may distract educators from the two central roles that they can play. Computers may be a curriculum design tool that offer a local, desktop publishing alternative to a centralized textbook-based curriculum. In this role, word processing offers a way to write, store, field test, and implement a flexible, self-refining curriculum design and implementation process.

The second role for computers is also word processor-based. Word processing is by far the broadest software tool to support instruction. Where word processing is used, curriculum alignment is natural. Students write about the things they would write about if they had no word processors. The difference is that with word processing, students can write in groups, revise, edit, and publish their writings. From grades K–college, word processing offers wonderful support for developing writing and reading skills.

Staff development, like instruction, is most effective at the application level. When teachers design sound units of instruction, they discover the key elements necessary to guide and inspire their students. Thus, staff development should focus upon enabling teachers to design, or at least interpret, integrated and well organized units.

There is a saying among cooperative learning-oriented educators that NONE OF US IS AS SMART AS ALL OF US. Word processing provides a medium in which all of us can work together to improve instruction.

Jon Madian

COMPUTER ASSISTED INSTRUCTION: WESTERN EUROPE

Owen and Irene Thomas

Large parts of this article are taken from a paper that Dr. Michael Vorbeck, of the Council of Europe, delivered at the International Congress on Education and Technology in Vancouver, B.C., in May 1986.

Twenty-four European countries have joined together to form the Council of Europe, and in turn the Council has formed a Council for Cultural Cooperation (CCC). The CCC has been particularly concerned with the "new information technologies" and has established a Documentation Centre for Education in Europe, located in Strasbourg, France, as well as an online data base of research and development projects in Frascati, Italy (ESA, Information Retrieval Service). In brief, the European governments agree that "schools and universities should prepare young people for the world of computers, on the one hand, by teaching about computers, and, on the other, by using computers."

But councils, centers and data bases are useless if teachers ignore them, and—with only a few exceptions—European teachers have done just that or, worse still, have actively opposed attempts to introduce computers into the schools.

At the post secondary level, all countries are offering degrees in computer science and are using CAI in the sciences, engineering and in economics. But computers are seldom used in the humanities.

In lower levels of education, the situation worsens proportionally. Most, but not all, CCC countries offer some computer instruction in grades ten through twelve, but again, this instruction is limited to technical subjects. In grades seven through nine, things "are far less developed." Only the "advanced" countries have provided computers for the schools, and they are used mostly in computer literacy courses. There are "just a few pilot experiments and isolated initiatives."

In primary school and preschools, "only France and the United Kingdom seem to have a national policy of introducing computers into schools." In Bavaria, authorities "deliberately reject" the use of computers in primary education.

In brief, the situation in Europe—with the exception of the United Kingdom (England, Scotland, Wales and northern Ireland) and parts of France—is grim, and the primary reason seems to be the attitudes held by teachers.

At present, most teachers (again, the U.K. is an exception) are skeptical, and many are even hostile. It is our opinion that, in this regard, they are at the point where U.S. teachers were five or six years ago. They're fearful of becoming obsolete, they resent the imposition of technology "from above," they distrust "computer enthusiasts," they have little if any experience with word processing, and they're apprehensive about their ability to acquire the new skills that CAI requires. Moreover, they have considerable political clout, since teacher's unions in Europe are much stronger than they are in the U.S.

Indeed, in a discussion with a French educator we were told that, even though every school in the country was given three computers by the government two or more years ago, many of these computers remain in unopened boxes. And this in spite of the fact that France is generally considered to be second only to the U.K. in the use of computers in schools.

The bright spot is, as noted, the United Kingdom. We'll be visiting schools and talking with program designers in December, and we'll report our findings in another article. With luck, we'll even come across new ideas for using word processors. In the meantime, we welcome comments from readers who've recently talked to teachers in Europe. ■

FrEd Writing

Bruce Fleury

***FrEdWriter** is a public domain word processor developed by educators for use in education. Bruce Fleury is the director of the project that developed **FrEdWriter**.*

FrEdWriter was designed to be easy to use for both teachers and students in elementary and secondary school. The commands are simple and easy to remember. However, it has been helpful for those who are learning and teaching with **FrEdWriter** to have a quick reference card.

The **FrEdWriter** Quick Reference Card is reproduced on the next page for you to duplicate on card stock. Keep a **FrEdWriter** Quick Reference Card at each computer to remind students of the commands.

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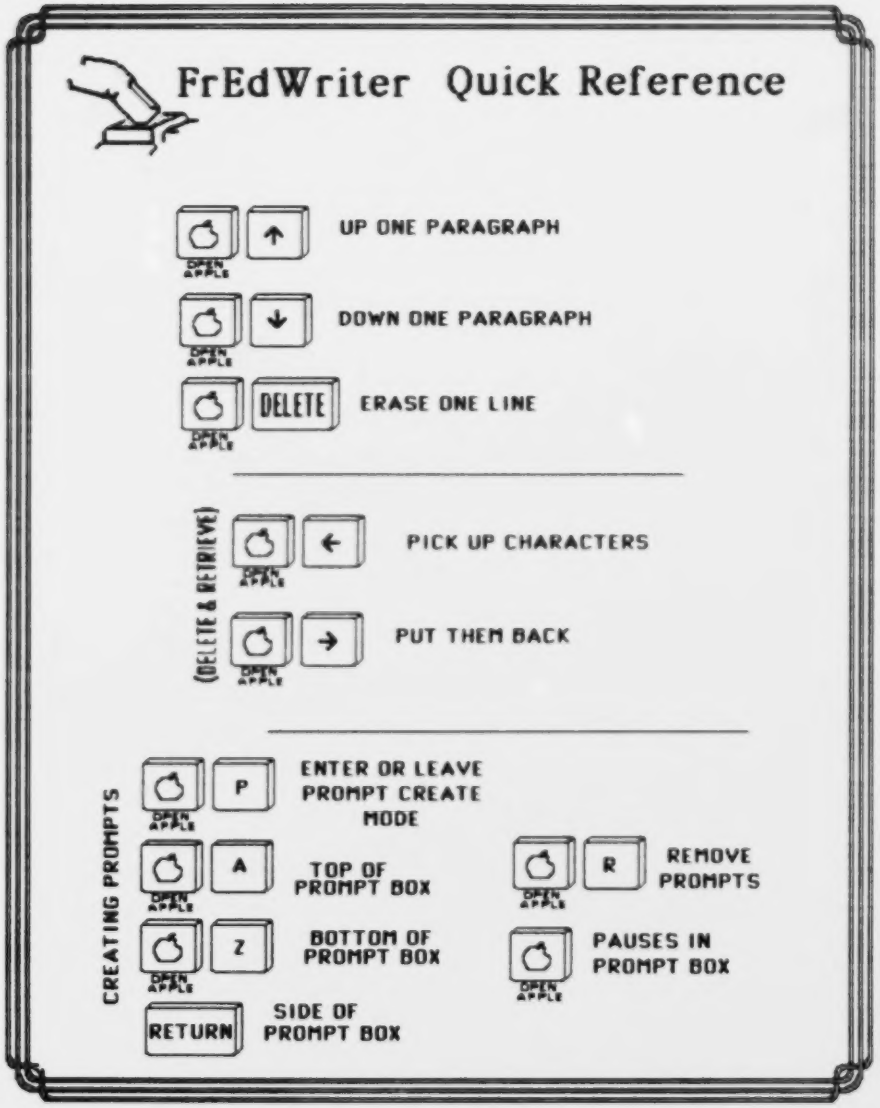
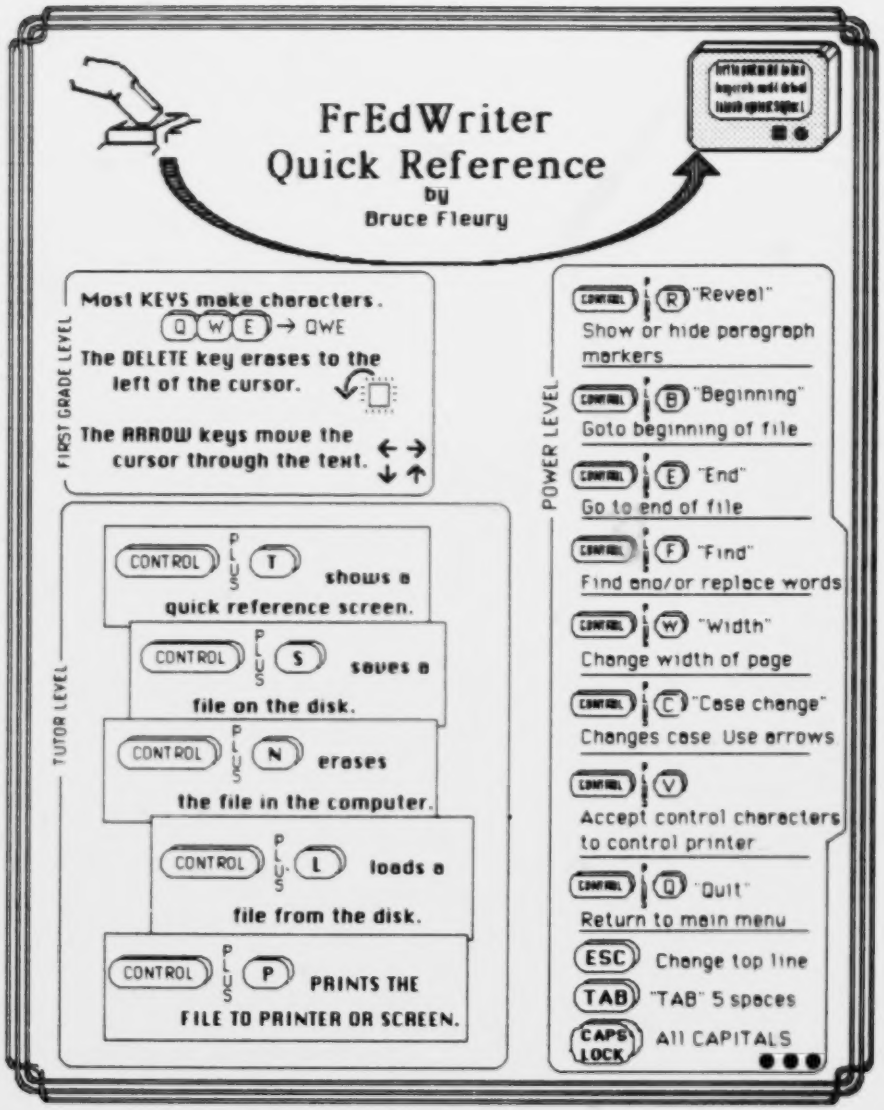
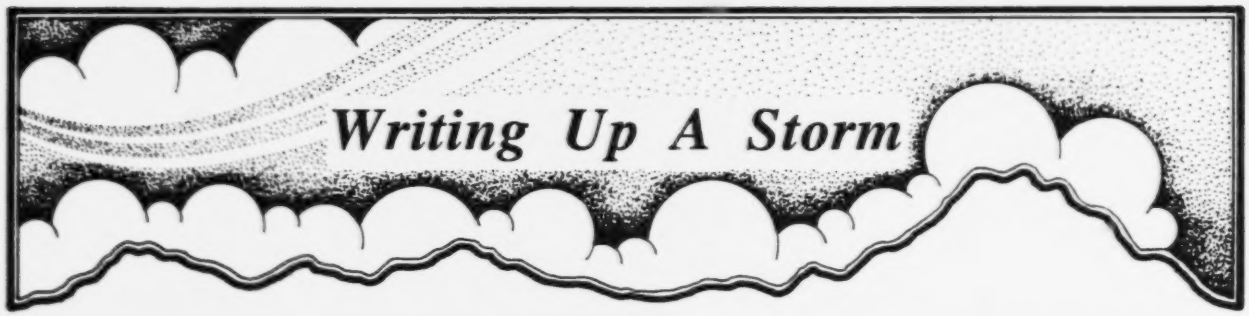

FrEdWriter Quick Reference
OPEN APPLE ↑ UP ONE PARAGRAPH
OPEN APPLE ↓ DOWN ONE PARAGRAPH
OPEN APPLE DELETE ERASE ONE LINE
(DELETE & RETRIEVE)
OPEN APPLE ← PICK UP CHARACTERS
OPEN APPLE → PUT THEM BACK
CREATING PROMPTS
OPEN APPLE P ENTER OR LEAVE PROMPT CREATE MODE
OPEN APPLE A TOP OF PROMPT BOX
OPEN APPLE Z BOTTOM OF PROMPT BOX
RETURN SIDE OF PROMPT BOX
OPEN APPLE R REMOVE PROMPTS
OPEN APPLE PAUSES IN PROMPT BOX


FrEdWriter
Quick Reference
by
Bruce Fleury
FIRST GRADE LEVEL
Most KEYS make characters.
Q W E → QWE
The DELETE key erases to the left of the cursor.
The ARROW keys move the cursor through the text.
TUTOR LEVEL
CONTROL PLUS T shows a quick reference screen.
CONTROL PLUS S saves a file on the disk.
CONTROL PLUS N erases the file in the computer.
CONTROL PLUS L loads a file from the disk.
CONTROL PLUS P PRINTS THE FILE TO PRINTER OR SCREEN.
POWER LEVEL
CONTROL R "Reveal" Show or hide paragraph markers
CONTROL B "Beginning" Goto beginning of file
CONTROL E "End" Go to end of file
CONTROL F "Find" Find and/or replace words
CONTROL W "Width" Change width of page
CONTROL C "Case change" Changes case Use arrows
CONTROL V Accept control characters to control printer
CONTROL Q "Quit" Return to main menu
ESC Change top line
TAB "TAB" 5 spaces
CAPS LOCK All CAPITALS

An Activity for THE WRITING WORKSHOP—



This lesson can be done on the chalkboard, with paper and pencil, as word processing files (see Teacher's Activities for details), or with the Prewriting disks that accompany Milliken's ***The Writing Workshop****.*

Student Outline

As you probably know, the hardest part of the writing process is often figuring out where to begin. One quick way to get started and to find out what you know about a topic is to write down everything the topic makes you think of—as fast as you can. Don't stop to worry about whether or not your ideas are good or bad. And don't stop to worry about spelling and punctuation. This rapid listing of ideas is often called brainstorming. You can even use brainstorming to generate an interesting topic when you don't have one.

1. For the next five minutes, write down every word or phrase you can think of when you see the word **HOT**.

   _____ _____ _____
   _____ _____ _____
   _____ _____ _____

2. Now read the following questions. If they give you any ideas you didn't have before, add them to your brainstorming list.

   Does the word **HOT** make you think of . . .
   - emotions or feelings? - people or places? - certain types of food? - tastes or flavors?
   - smells, sounds, sights, colors? - certain times of the day or year?

3. Suppose you were going to write a short piece called **HOT**. Which words and phrases would you use from your list? Circle them.

4. Now think about which words and phrases might go together in groups. Try to make at least four groups using boxes like the ones below.

5. Give a name to each group, and write it above the group.

NOW you have something to start thinking about. Suppose you choose to write a paragraph about one of your groups of ideas. What might you say in your first sentence (topic sentence) as an introduction to your paragraph? Write a possible sentence below.

_____.

Teacher Activities

This lesson introduces students to the technique of brainstorming as an idea-generator that utilizes word association. Students who have never done this kind of activity might need some prompting and a reminder not to judge their items on the first round. The second step is to make selections followed by some rough "grouping" of selected items.

This lesson is particularly well suited to working in pairs or small groups.

1. Adapt this student activity for the computer by entering the topic **HOT** and a brief set of instructions for brainstorming, including a time limit and a reminder not to judge the words yet. When time is up, they may keep the words they like best and delete others. Occasionally you may want to encourage students to do freewriting at this stage; that is, allow them to write a fluency draft right after brainstorming without requiring deliberate grouping first. This is a first step in selecting details based on writer's preference alone. Have them save their work on a file called "Hot."

   The brainstorming diskette, of course, provides a utility which expedites free writing and follows it with grouping and naming groups. (See notes to the Brainstorming diskette for other suggestions.)

2. If you wish, have students go back to their brainstorms and write a paragraph based on one of their groups. Asking them to write their opening sentence, as they did in the student activity, will help them to focus on their topic and purpose. Their paragraphs should be saved on the same file with the brainstorm, so that they may consult it or revise it as needed.

   Older or more experienced writers could be encouraged to write a multiparagraph essay, based on all their notes.

3. Consider the following stimulus words for additional brainstorming:

EMPTY	BLUE	ANGER
TREE	MUSIC	DOOR
ALONE	STAR	FUNNY
WAIT	SPRING	RUN ■

COMING NEXT MONTH—

- A focus on editing
- Data bases and writing
- Storytelling sequence, pt. 2

Writing with the Turtle

Judy Bachman

"LogoWriter, particularly in the primary grades, offers a great opportunity to make that reading/writing connection, and to make learning to read FUN! And for older students with more programming capabilities, LogoWriter combines programmability, data base capabilities and text manipulation in a way that makes writing truly an exciting event for teachers and students!"

Up until now, for better or worse, we've created nice, neat catagories for Logo and for word processing.

Logo: a mathematically rich programming and problem solving environment.

Word processing: perhaps the easiest and most logical way, particularly for teachers new to computing, to use computers with their students.

And all too often if a choice is to be made because of a limited budget, word processing is chosen over Logo.

Until **LogoWriter**, that is.

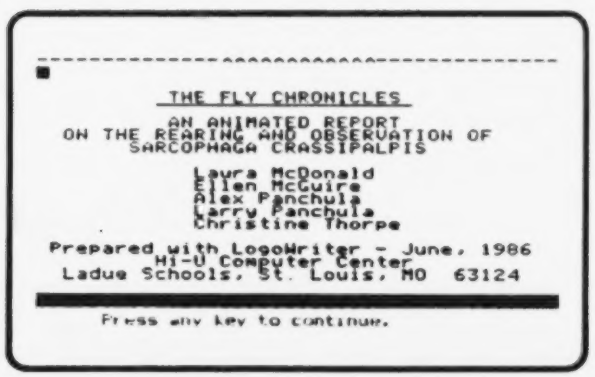
LogoWriter allows writing in any subject area to come alive and to unfold with text, graphics and sound that can appear, disappear, move and change at the discretion of the author. The "no threshold, no ceiling" philosophy of Logo is even more evident in **LogoWriter**. The saving and recalling of text and graphics is extremely easy, allowing even very young children to build and print their pictures and text. The use of **LogoWriter**, particularly in the primary grades, offers a great opportunity to make that reading/writing connection, and to make learning to read FUN! And for older students with more programming capabilities, **LogoWriter** combines programmability, data base capabilities and text manipulation in a way that makes writing truly an exciting event for teachers and students!

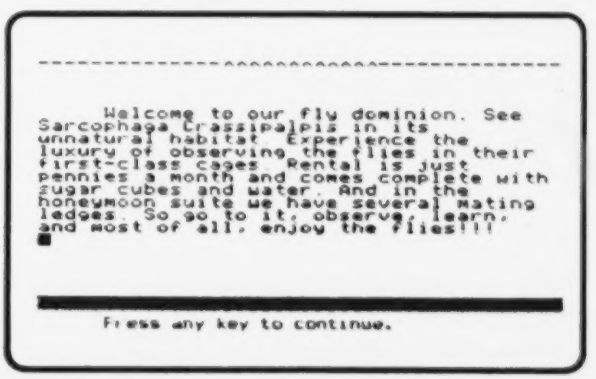
Report Writing Transformed

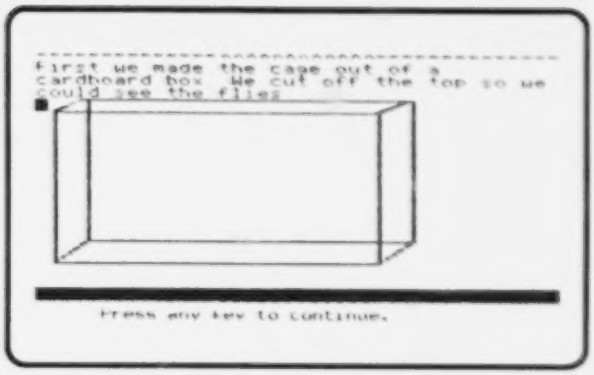
Marion Rosen, a gifted education and computer resource teacher in Ladue, Missouri, used **LogoWriter** with a group of sixth graders as the culmination of a unit on the life cycle and breeding habits of the Sargophaga Crassipalpis fly.

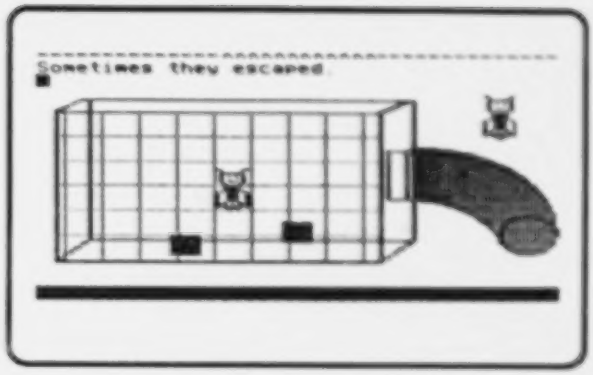
Imagine yourself as the "reader" of this report. Instead of simply wading through a six- to eight-page report, you can learn step by step how to build the breeding cages, while at the same time seeing the construction unfold on the screen.

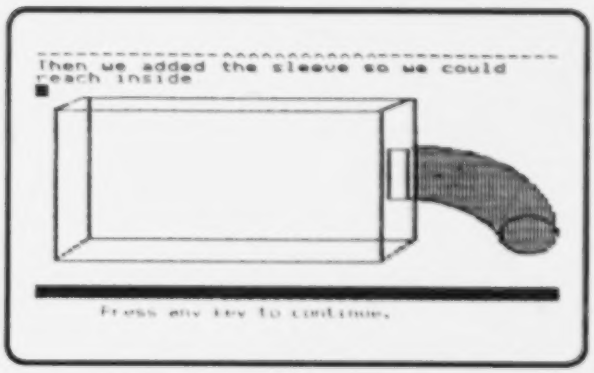
Here is a sample of the opening screens. (Remember, of course, that you are now reading "dead" text and are missing all the sound effects and action of the hidden turtle building the cage.)



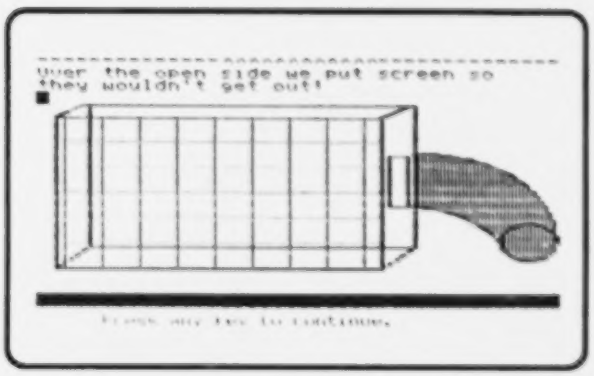

Welcome to our fly dominion. See Sarcophaga Crassipalpis in its unnatural habitat. Experience the luxury of observing the flies in their first-class cages. Rental is just pennies a month and comes complete with sugar cubes and water. And in the honeymoon suite we have several mating ledges. So go to it, observe, learn, and most of all, enjoy the flies!!!
Press any key to continue.





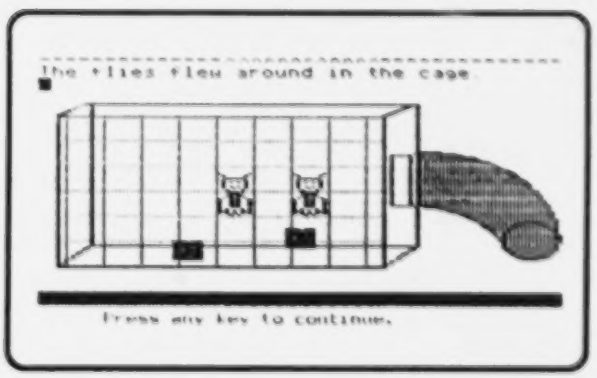


The next screen presents you with choices about what you'd like to learn next about the Sargophaga Crassipalpis fly. If a certain key is pressed, you can read about the stages of development of this insect. When the "B" (larva stage) is selected from this data base, the text screen appears, and an informative report on the larva of the fly is presented. While reading, you will become aware of the larva emerging and "wumping" (no kidding, that's what it sounds like) across the bottom of the screen. The word "growing" is stamped across the screen to remind you of the current process. As this worm-like object continues across the screen, it suddenly stops, the word "Molt" flashes, and suddenly there is a larger larva moving with deeper sounding "wumps." Another molting, deeper "wumps," a larger larva, and it continues up the screen (most of us reading this report were completely hysterical by this time). As it reaches the top of the screen, the word "PUPATE!" flashes (and screams), appears and disappears letter by letter, and then the pupa appears.

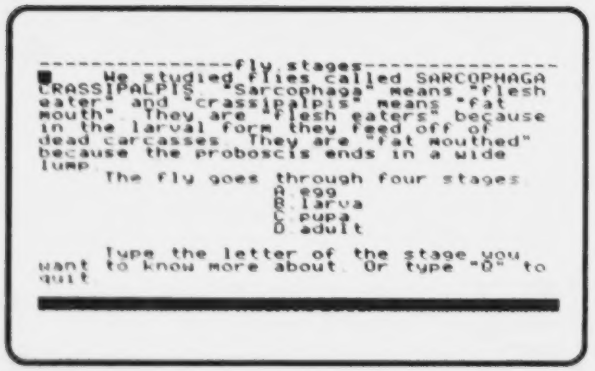


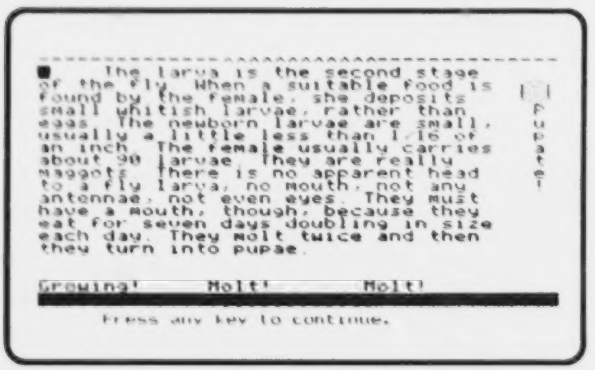
Now all is quiet, and you have no choice but to "PRESS ANY KEY TO CONTINUE." This returns you to the data base selection screen, with the opportunity to learn more about the life cycle of this fly, or to QUIT.

Quitting does not simply return you to a blank screen, however. Instead, a grand finale is presented with music, flies buzzing, and a polite message about the knowledge and enjoyment that the authors hope you have received from this report.



The organization, knowledge and programming abilities exhibited by these student authors is impressive. But interestingly enough, the most valuable and impressive outcome reported by the teacher was the collaboration of the students in creating this report. The discussions and arguments that occurred, and the ideas bouncing around in the room (and probably outside, as well) were really exciting. Isn't that what learning is all about?


fly stages
We studied flies called SARCOPHAGA CRASSIPALPIS. "Sarcophaga" means "flesh eater" and "crassipalpis" means "fat mouth". They are "flesh eaters" because in the larval form they feed off of dead carcasses. They are "fat mouthed" because the proboscis ends in a wide lump.
The fly goes through four stages:
A egg
B larva
C pupa
D adult
Type the letter of the stage you want to know more about. Or type "0" to quit.


The larva is the second stage of the fly. When a suitable food is found by the female, she deposits small whitish larvae, rather than eggs. The newborn larvae are small, usually a little less than 1/16 of an inch. The female usually carries about 90 larvae. They are really maggots. There is no apparent head to a fly larva, no mouth, not any antennae, not even eyes. They must have a mouth, though, because they eat for seven days doubling in size each day. They molt twice and then they turn into pupae.
Growing!
Molt!
Molt!
Press any key to continue.

This project obviously was not done by beginners. The teacher is a remarkable person as well as a very experienced and capable Logo programmer. The students are not beginners either, and are also very bright and capable. I selected this project to share with **THE WRITING NOTEBOOK** readers in order to demonstrate the potential of **LogoWriter**.

The beauty of **LogoWriter**, however, is that it is easy for a beginner to have wonderful results. Next time I'll share some work done during summer computer camp by children entering first grade this fall, including some children who have been diagnosed as disabled.

Think About . . . .

LogoWriter and Poetry - Can you imagine how an author can allow his or her words to unfold in the same rhythm as the Haiku?

LogoWriter and Book Reports - Finally an end to the boring book report syndrome!

LogoWriter and the Beginning Reader - Language experience teachers will be especially interested in this.

LogoWriter and the Special Child - Especially for children with communication disorders....

LogoWriter and ???????? - The possibilities are limited only by one's imagination.

Getting Started

Before I give you the vitals concerning **LogoWriter**, I should explain a site license. When a school purchases **LogoWriter**, the site license allows the school to make as many copies as is necessary for students and faculty. For an additional fee, a copy can also be sent home with any student who has an Apple or IBM at home.

LCSI (Logo Computer Systems Inc.)
555 W. 57th Street, Suite 1236
New York, NY 10019
ph. 212/247-0444

LogoWriter Site License - $395.
Extension License - additional $150.

With this license comes a **LogoWriter** newsletter and opportunities for teacher training at various locations around the country. (Call LCSI for more information).

Teacher training videotapes on Logo are available through a company called Media Microworlds, Inc. This company was started by a school administrator who was frustrated by the lack of quality teacher training materials for school districts wishing to use Logo. These tapes feature Seymour Papert, considered the "father of the Logo language." They show not only the "how to" programming aspects of the language, but the process of teaching and learning within a Logo environment. Two of these videotapes deal specifically with **LogoWriter**. For more information and prices, write or call:

Media MicroWorlds Inc.
12 Clayton Terrace
St. Louis, MO 63131
ph. 314/567-0150

[Judy Bachman, 7926 Gannon, St. Louis, MO 63130.]

This column needs YOU!! Collectively we (meaning all of us out there) should be able to bounce ideas around for limitless inspiration. So please send your ideas and printouts to share in this column. Don't worry if you are "only a beginner" or it's "only an idea." Someone else might take that idea, develop it further, and send it back. Can't wait to start hearing from you!

KEYBOARDING—An Interview with Keith Wetzel

A former elementary and middle school teacher, Keith Wetzel has conducted research on teaching writing and word processing to students grades 3–5, and is currently workshop coordinator for the Center for Advanced Technology in Education at the University of Oregon. Keith agreed to share his views on the subject of keyboarding with ***The Writing Notebook*** *readers.*

Keith, many people feel that touch typing is a fundamental skill students need before they can get the full benefits of word processing. What do you think?

With some hesitation I would agree. If teachers and students have a sufficient amount of hardware and software to make keyboarding training realistic—yes. If students are using the computer for an hour or less a week, they should use a word processor or writing aid without worrying about keyboarding.

Recently I read Henry Becker's survey of computers in the schools. He found that in computer-owning schools, the computer/student ratio nationally was 1 to 40. For each student to use the computer for 30 minutes a day, a 1 to 12 ratio is needed. I believe that in a situation in which there are a limited number of computers, keyboarding instruction should be ignored. A short amount of time—an hour, perhaps—may be used to acquaint students with the home row and where to place their hands. But if time is indeed precious, I recommend using it to do a class project where everyone makes a contribution, rather than using the time to teach keyboarding at the expense of other computer experiences.

How long does it take for students to become competent beginning touch typists?

This question is related to the goal of the keyboard instruction. If third, fourth and fifth graders are to type as quickly as they can write by pencil, they will need 20 to 30 hours of instruction. In addition, new research has indicated that elementary students (after 20 hours of instruction) regress in their touch typing skills if they do not practice touch typing at intervals throughout the year.

What criteria should elementary students achieve to be considered adequate typists?

Truthfully, I wish the keyboarding question did not exist, because the really question should be: What experiences do students need to learn to enjoy writing and improve their writing? Clearly, the primary goal is not keyboarding, it's writing.

Now the problem is that if students are to benefit from the advantage of using word processing—ease of revision—they need to be able to use the word processor efficiently.

Without keyboarding instruction, upper elementary students will write at the keyboard at half the rate they write with pencil. Is this a problem? Yes. The physical part of writing—transcription—should be an automatic skill. Students should use their mental energy to think about ideas, how to express them, what goes next, the audience, and so on. When they have to add one more task to an already complex set of writing tasks, writing becomes more difficult rather than less.

Students in the upper elementary grades write with pencil at about 10 words per minute. Without keyboard training they write with the computer at a rate of 5 words per minute. Students should keyboard as efficiently as they write by pencil before they begin to use the computer for their daily writing. And then they should practice touch typing at intervals until their typing rate reaches 20 words per minute. Business education experts have indicated that students retain more of their newly acquired skills once they reach the plateau of 20 words per minute.

How do we decide when to teach kids to touch type? Is it a function of size of hand? Dexterity? Maturity? Attention span? Or can we base the decision simply on when students have access to the computer for word processing?

I would agree with the last comment. Students should receive keyboarding instruction just prior to actual use of the computer for writing.

If we lived in a world in which we could decide the optimal configuration, then the question of maturity would be more important.

I have read that children in grades K and 1 can keyboard

as accurately and quickly as they can write by pencil. Intuitively this makes sense. I haven't measured this, but I've taught first graders to print, and I know how much they struggle with the direction of the letters, staying on the lines, and writing neatly.

I suspect that if keyboarding instruction started in first grade, a shorter amount of concentrated instruction would be required in the third and fourth grades. And in grades K and 1, nothing would need to be replaced in the curriculum. Just as students practice tracing letters, they would practice the letter in another manner—saying, seeing, and pressing the correct key. This is a good research topic. I think it would be worth further investigation over a period of years.

There are a number of new keyboarding programs. How do the newer programs differ from the earlier programs?

Generally, the programs that are based on sound theory developed by the business educators are the best. I think we have moved passed the violent, space invaders-variety games that attempt to fascinate and entertain as well as drill.

Now we have programs that are more closely related to the typing instruction taught at the secondary level. These programs are in my opinion the best. They model correct posture and keystriking, and many of them offer excellent drill as well as opportunities to use an open screen, where the teacher can dictate spelling words and sentences.

It seems that it would be most desirable to teach keyboarding in a lab setting. Is this true? Can keyboarding be taught in a classroom with one computer?

Again, the one computer to 30 students classroom does not allow sufficient time for each student to practice every day for 20 minutes. Mathematically there is not enough time during the school day for each student to get on the computer. Remember there are times during the day when students do not use the computer—lunch, movies, art, PE, regrouping for math, etc.

A lab usually allows teachers to set priorities such as "This year all third grade classes will use the computer for keyboarding during the second nine-week period, and then they will use the lab for writing during the third and fourth nine-week periods."

Should spelling and related writing skills be taught while teaching typing?

This is an interesting idea; however, to date I'm not aware of any teachers who have achieved this kind of integration. In typing instruction there is a standard progression for teaching the order of the letters; you teach the home row keys before you teach the keys you need to stretch to type.

On the other hand, if you were emphasizing c-v-c words in language arts, and during your keyboarding time you practiced short a words such as ad, add, dad and sad, there would be an excellent opportunity for integration.

Do you see benefits to teaching touch typing to language disabled students?

Again, I don't know that I can generalize to all students with learning disabilities. I would definitely try it. I've seen several reports that testify to the success of word processing with children who have writing problems. However, keyboarding requires dexterity and motor/visual coordination, and it would be wise to see if a student with a particular problem would benefit from use of the keyboard. We know that there are some children who have more trouble learning to keyboard than others. I recommend trying it on an individual basis and proceeding if it is worth the amount of time needed to master the skill.

Can we turn keyboard instruction over to a computer keyboarding program entirely, or is it important for teachers to model or demonstrate or otherwise deliver instruction in addition to the computer program?

The computer cannot watch the student perform. It cannot monitor whether a student strikes the key with the correct finger.

Philosophically I have problems with those who would replace teachers with machines. Learning includes much more than specific skill acquisition. Seldom do computers teach love of learning. Teachers include reasons, models, values, human interaction, and the human touch.

This point was illustrated in a research study at the college level: a group of college students received a computer-based typing program. They practiced without teacher assistance for an hour a day for thirty days. At the

end of the training, the speed and accuracy of these students were compared to those who completed a teacher-based typing program. The skill levels of the students were similar at the end of 30 days; however, the computer-based students complained that their questions weren't answered, and that they didn't receive assistance when needed.

The components of a good school district keyboarding instructional program include: 1) collaboration in planning and implementing the program between business education (touch typing teachers) and elementary teachers; 2) elementary teachers who have sufficient training in the teaching of keyboarding to feel comfortable with the delivery of a new skill; 3) a scripted teacher's guide that makes direct instruction efficient; and 4) a good keyboarding software program.

What are the most important characteristics a school district should look for in a keyboarding instructional program?

My answer may not be the expected answer. I would not start with the software. I would start with the teacher training and the amount of student practice time demanded by any program that will work. Here are the questions I would ask:

1) Did teachers receive training to teach their students keyboarding, or are they beginning without training? Was this training done by business education experts? Do teachers feel competent to teach keyboarding?

2) Is there a sufficient time for each student to practice? And once the keyboarding instruction is complete, are the skills practiced at times in order to maintain the skill level?

3) Does the program include a recordkeeping component (either a disk-based or a paper-based [graph] method of recording progress)?

4) Is there sufficient variety in the program? Does it combine teacher dictation, disk-based practice and nonviolent games?

5) Do students using the program meet your goals for the program? If students are to type at least as fast as they write by pencil, do they? Is there any research to suggest that following the program works?

Typing programs seem to emphasize technique, speed and accuracy to varying degrees. Of these, is there a priority teachers should be aware of as they instruct their students?

They are all related; however, the goal is for students to be able to use the computer for writing, for improving their writing, and to learn to think by revising and rewriting. Good technique is immaterial if students still type substantially slower than they write with pencil. If keyboarding does not become automatic, students will not spend their cognitive energy on the higher-level task of communicating effectively.

Typing teachers especially feel that if kids learn to hunt and peck first, it will be harder for them to learn to touch type. Do you agree?

Several business education teachers have voiced this concern to me, while others have indicated that it is not of great concern to them. A major point is the extent of prior student keyboard practice. Those who were less concerned felt that the occasional computer use of elementary students was not a problem. I think that if students use the computer at least two hours a week, then they should have keyboarding instruction, and the instruction should be consistent with instruction they may receive at a later time such as in business education courses.

There's a political issue about who should teach touch typing, typing teachers or classroom or English teachers. Do you have any thoughts on this?

I personally would like to have the teacher in the grade before the students come to me teach it! I think that language arts time **should not** be used for typing instruction.

An ideal place for keyboarding is in a computer literacy class. Some schools offer a computer literacy class for every sixth grader in the district. These classes include a wide variety of topics. I've found that this is an ideal place to teach it. About 20 minutes of the 50-minute class is then devoted to keyboarding instruction. The next step is to teach word processing and to practice the keyboarding skills in the word processing assignments. Data base usage may follow and again, as students input data, they practice keyboarding skills. In this situation, selected computer literacy teachers receive training to teach keyboarding to all students. Language arts teachers teach writing with the computer as a tool, not keyboarding or the mechanics of word processing. ■

KEYBOARDING ISSUES AND CONCERNS

Karen Jostad and Jon Madian

Are you one of the many language arts teachers who, while convinced of the value of word processing, consider laborious hunting and pecking a poor tradeoff, especially when time needs to be spent on writing skills?

Some new keyboarding programs make learning to type much more efficient and fun than ever before; still, educators disagree over whether learning to touch type is the best use of a student's limited computer time. On the other hand, good touch typing skills and use of a word processor certainly make writing more enjoyable while improving both the writer's ability to compose thoughts and the quality of the final composition. In any case, there does seem to be general agreement that students probably should not be taught touch typing before the fourth grade, and that they will need approximately six weeks of daily practice (20-minute sessions) to gain a beginning level of proficiency.

If you are thinking about teaching touch typing on computers this year, there are a number of exciting new programs to choose from. In this article we will discuss the features we find most significant.

1. Language-based approach

Many of the new programs designed for school use have what is being called a language-based approach. Students learn or are at least reinforced in their spelling and even composing skills while they learn to type. In other words, instead of typing letter combinations that never occur in words such as "tsaf," students might type "as fast as." It is logical from every point of view that the more students type letter patterns likely to be found in words, the more expert they will become in their typing. Figure 1 shows an example from **Key-Words**.

Advocates of this language-based approach hope that this word patterning approach to typing will do more than merely increase student accuracy and speed in typing. They point out that there is a body of research that indicates that many people learn to spell and even compose more easily when they learn to type. In other words, while people are learning to type they can also learn basic word and sentence patterns. This is particularly significant for students who are still developing their basic spelling and writing skills, whether they are average fourth graders, bilingual, special education students, or otherwise language disadvantaged. But even if the beginning typist is an excellent speller, these language-based keyboarding packages should still be more efficient in helping them gain speed and accuracy.

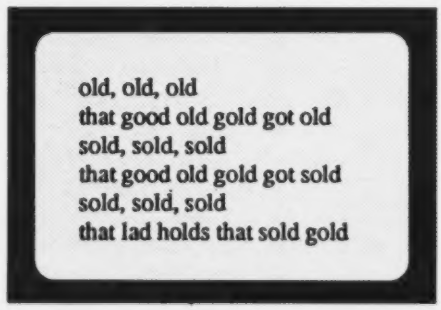

old, old, old
that good old gold got old
sold, sold, sold
that good old gold got sold
sold, sold, sold
that lad holds that sold gold

Figure 1. *The rhythm of the chant poetry form combined with short commonly used words from the "old" family, teaches the"o"and "g" keys.*

2. Accuracy and speed developed as separate skills

A second design innovation separates the development of accuracy from the development of speed. Current research in the teaching of typing shows the relative importance of typing skills to be in this order: correct technique, speed of stroking, and accuracy. This makes perfect sense—and yet, many older typing programs still combine speed and accuracy practice and disregard technique.

Programs should carefully introduce technique and provide quick and easy access to review information on technique via reference cards, wall charts or other devices. Then students should be able to work on their accuracy without being overly concerned about speed, and practice speed without being overly concerned about accuracy.

Only at the point of moving from one level of skill development to the next higher level should students expect to achieve a measure of combined speed and accuracy.

3. Order of keys taught

A third interesting development pertains to which keys are taught first--specifically, not beginning by teaching the home row. While most keyboarding programs still focus initially upon the home row, there are now a few programs that have broken with tradition and teach other keys first. Research in the area of kinesthetics indicates that the first keys to introduce should be those that use the stonger, better coordinated pointer and middle fingers. The need for beginning typists to peek under their fingers is much alleviated by not introducing all home row keys at the same time.

There are two sides to this argument, however. Do students sense the home row when they don't know the keys? How important is it to provide additional practice for weaker little fingers that strike the all important "a" and "p" keys? Interestingly, even programs that don't teach the "a" first teach it very early, so perhaps this is more an area for debate among theorists than a practical concern.

4. Introducing word processing editing features concurrently with keyboarding instruction

A fourth design characteristic we are seeing in new keyboarding programs is the introduction of word processing editing features concurrently with keyboarding instruction. This makes sense. We are learning to use a new technology, and not just a typing keyboard. The use of the DELETE key is the one editing feature that bears discussion. Speed and fluency of stroking is believed to be inhibited by correcting errors as you type. Currently composing instructors as well as keyboarding instructors agree that corrections should not be made until the passage is completed. When you are looking at keyboarding programs, notice that although many keyboarding programs make the DELETE key functional during practice sessions, others have arrived at a more preferable design that allows for the correction of errors on an edit screen, but only after sufficient practice has developed letter stroking patterns to a fluent level.

5. Recordkeeping system

A fifth design consideration is the recordkeeping system. Most of the newer programs have the ability to keep track of a number of students. Some of them can even keep track of pairs of students who are taking turns using the program during the same practice session. This has obvious advantages in most lab or classroom settings.

Summary

As in all other software, buyer beware! Many new and popular keyboarding programs have wedded keyboard practice with arcade game formats. Many of these programs are so goal-oriented that speed becomes the main target, rather than correct technique of finger placement (which often is reduced to a hurried hunt and peck) or correct eye movement (students search for single letters or words to appear somewhere on the screen). Fluency in stroking patterns also is not developed, because students are presented unrelated and non-sequenced material. Remember: Eventually a good touch typist will type in phrases--not letters or even words. Arcade games work against this objective.

Wherever there is considerable innovation, there is a danger that designers will take an idea too far, that in breaking with tradition they will lose some of the structure that was of basic utility. While the five innovations mentioned above can represent improvements, it's a good idea to take a look at some keyboarding programs before purchasing one. Look at the design of the programs, keeping in mind your own students and instructional goals.

Here are five keyboarding programs that we suggest you look at before deciding:

Keyboard Cadet
Apple, IBM, Commodore
Mindscapes
3444 Dundee Rd.
Northbrook, IL 60062
(312) 480-7667
$39.95

Success with Typing
Apple
Scholastic, Inc.
730 Broadway
New York, NY 10003
(212) 505-3000
$87.84

Key-Words
Apple
Humanities Software
PO Box 590727
San Francisco, CA 94159
(415) 759-9324
$49.95

Type!
Apple, IBM, Commodore
Broderbund
17 Paul Drive
San Rafael, CA 94903
(415) 479-1700
$44.95

Microtype, The Wonderful World of Paws
Apple, Commodore, IBM, Radio Shack
South-Western Publishing
Cincinnati, OH
$39.95 ■

Timely Writing Ideas

Primary Level Journals

Are your students drawing and writing their dreams in their journals? Primary grade students love to share their dreams orally, and you'll find they're just as enthusiastic about illustrating and writing them. You may want to inspire their dream telling by reading *There's a Nightmare in My Closet* by Mercer Mayer. They'll love dramatizing the story—especially the monster who comes menacingly out of the closet only to turn into a very large but very frightened "baby."

Winter Poems for Primary Students

Thanksgiving and winter holidays provide a wealth of writing experiences for primary grade students. The chant form gives beginning readers and writers a wonderful sense of independence. Students will want to continue writing after the lesson is over, they'll write poems at home, students who've never written before will write, and ESL students will write in English for the first time using this pattern. Here are some patterns and subjects for the winter season:

Cold, cold, cold
The wind blows on my nose
Cold, cold, cold
The icicles sparkle
Cold, cold, cold
I'm cold when I make a snowman

The emphasis here is upon a simple chant line that repeats three times. Each chant line repeats three times (more or less) and is interspersed with simple descriptive lines that may or may not begin with an "I" statement. Rhyme is avoided so students will seek real experiences to report rather than relying on silly rhymes.

Here are some other chant lines that can be repeated three or four times to form a chant poem:

Jingle, jingle, jingle
Gobble, gobble, gobble
Sledding, sledding, sledding (or slide, slide, slide)
Icicle, icicle, icicle
Snow, snow, snow
Ice, ice, ice
Sparkle, sparkle, sparkle
Thanks, thanks, thanks

An alternative to using only one chant line throughout the poem is to encourage students to create new chant lines. Then instead of having cold on every line, students might write a poem like this:

Cold, cold, cold
Brrr, I'm freezing
Brrr, brrr, brrr
I'm too cold
Warm, warm, warm
I want hot chocolate, now!

Second graders can also work with simple acrostic themes; however, they probably won't have the independent success with acrostics that they will have with chants, so you may need to write these as a class or in small groups:

C old is
O n everything
L ike shimmering
D iamonds

Short vivid words like ice, snow, jingle, thanks, ribbons, sing, give, play and love work best for acrostic and chant poems. In fact, it is a good idea to first have students write a chant using one of these words and then have them choose a chant word and write an acrostic poem.

Winter Poems for Third through College Students

The chant and acrostic forms are challenging and fun at all grade levels. At third grade and beyond you may sometimes want to encourage students to play with rhyme, while encouraging them to find as much meaning as possible. Though you'll see a lot of silly rhymes, your students will tell you that they are delighting in writing even if what they are writing is less than inspiring to the adult ear. Another benefit of such rhyme play is that students sharpen their spelling and phonetic skills.

Thus, in working on the theme of cold, you might go through the rhyming dictionary or brainstorm to find words that rhyme with cold (old, bold, fold, gold, hold, mold, rolled, sold, scold, and told), and freeze (breeze, cheese, sneeze, wheeze, squeeze, knees, please, these, peas, sees, bees, tease, ease, keys).

Below are a few verses using the chant combined with rhymes and a simile or two.

Cold, cold, cold
The cold is bold
The cold is too cold to hold
Cold, cold, cold

Sometimes I want to scold
the chilly, freezing, cold
Sometimes in the cold
the sun is as warm as gold

But in the wind
The gold warm sun
Loses its hold
And I shiver 'cause
I'm so cold

In that chilly breeze
I start to sneeze

Another rich rhyme family is built around "ow" and "oe" words like slow, snow, blow, glow, flow, show, grow, bow, know, mow, pillow, row, stow, woe, doe, hoe, Joe, toe, oboe and tiptoe. These combined with the long "o" words in the "old" group create a large number of fun winter poems.

Blow, blow, blow
The chilly wind blows
The snowy hills grow
Into hilly flows of snow
Soft and round as pillows
As cold as my frozen toes
As red and blue as my nose
This is winter weather
Filled with icy feathers

The poetic potential of acrostics is illustrated in the acrostic below. The acrostic is probably the best form for small or large group cooperative composing. The acrostic will also drive students to the dictionary to find words that begin with a particular letter. In this poem, we had to go to the dictionary to find our "K" word.

T urkeys
U fortunately
R ebel too late
K illed by fate
E nd tastily on
Y our
S upper plate

Several of the activities listed above are available on the **WRITE ON!** Diskettes from Humanities Software, P.O. Box 590727, San Francisco, CA 94159.

Two Wonderful Books for the Holiday Season

Wilfrid Gordon McDonald Partridge by Mem Fox and illustrated by Julie Vivas is a touchingly told and beautifully illustrated story of a young boy who lives next to an old age home. When Wilfrid Gordon learns that one of the old people, Miss Nancy, has lost her memory, he tries to learn just exactly what a memory is so he can find a memory to give to Miss Nancy.

While this story isn't directly about a particular holiday, it is about friendship and the power of caring and giving. Based upon this story, your students can tell and write about their own memories, about old people they know or have known, and about friendship. This book will inspire journal, story and poetry writing, and maybe a memory or two.

Rosie and Michael by Judith Viorst is a very honest book, full of real life humor. A line is repeated, so that no matter what horrible thing each child does to the other, the ending refrain is always: "Michael is *my* friend...." "Rosie is *my* friend...."

You may want to try one of the patterns on the **WRITE ON!** Diskettes for this story:

Even though _____ (best friend's name and what he or she does)

I still like _____ (best friend's name)

Even though I _____(do *x* to best friend)

_____ (my best friend) still likes me.

For example: Even though I tell Ramon that he can come play at my house, and then I wait until he comes to tell him that he gets to help me clean my room, Ramon still likes me.

Middle Grades and Beyond

The following calender-related activities are based on information beautifully provided in the book, *The Kids Diary of 365 Amazing Days* by Randy Harelson. This book is a treasure chest of dates that will interest your students. For example, Randy tells us that on November 25, 1956, the first person parachute-jumped into Antarctica. What do you suppose he expected to find? If that had been you, what might you have found after you landed? What would you have worn to keep warm? What supplies would you have taken? If you could have invited one companion, who would you have chosen? Perhaps

students can write a diary of their experiences, spanning perhaps one week, patterned after *My Side of the Mountain* by Jean George. After initial research, the entries could be added on a daily basis or completed as one writing assignment, either individually or as a cooperative writing assignment.

November 29 • Louisa May Alcott Day
November 30 • Mark Twain Day

In honor of Louisa May Alcott and Mark Twain, you might want to read excerpts from works by each of these writers. Here's a riddle from *Amazing Days*:

Q: How is it possible that Mark Twain was born in both Florida and Missouri?
A: He was born in Florida, (a city) in Missouri!

Discuss pen names. Why did many creative people use pen names? Who are some other famous people who write under pen names? Let your students create their own pen names.

December 5 • Walt Disney's Birthday

Ask students to write their best Disney-inspired memories in their journals. This is one case where sharing journals will be really fun! Have them write an acrostic about Walt Disney, Disneyland, or a favorite character. Have a cartoon drawing contest for Disney look-alikes and original cartoon characters. Research Walt's life. What American values does his life model?

December 10 • Emily Dickinson's Birthday

Emily Dickinson was born in 1830 and died in 1886. Read several of her poems aloud. Then have students write about the poem they like best. Have students try to write their own Emily Dickinson-type poem. Her style and rhythms are quite clear. For example:

I'm nobody. Who are you?
Are you nobody too?
Then there's a pair of us.
Don't tell—they'd banish us, you know

How dreary to be somebody,
How public—like a frog—

To tell your name the livelong June
To an admiring bog

December 15 • Bill of Rights Day

The first ten amendments to the Constitution were ratified in 1791. The importance of guaranteeing each of these freedoms is of the greatest significance. This date can spawn discussion and essays on the importance of freedom of thought and speech, and on the relationship between the individual and the state.

December 16 • Beethoven's Birthday

Draw pictures and do freewriting inspired by his music. Refashion the freewriting into a poem, story or coherent essay or journal entry.

December 21 • Anniversary of the First Crossword Puzzle

The crossword puzzle was invented by Arthur Wynne and published in the New York World on this day in 1913. Perhaps when students return from vacation they can make up and do crossword puzzles. You may want to use MECC's **Puzzles and Posters**. The computer will draw the box and put in the numbers once the kids figure out the questions and the answers.

December 22 • Winter Solstice

This is the shortest day of the year in the Northern Hemisphere and the longest day in the Southern. How can we understand this? What effect did this shortening of the days have upon primitive man and his religious festivals? If you've created a primitive observatory, this should mark the most southerly passage of the sun. Students may enjoy writing poems or stories that capture the imagination of primitive man at this time of year when, if you're not lucky, the days may just keep getting shorter and shorter and colder and colder!

January 2 • Sci Fi Celebration—Isaac Asimov's Birthday

Research Isaac Asimov's life and work. Discover how unbelievably productive he has been. Perhaps students have read some of his short stories or novels. Have students report on favorite science fiction movies (some based on Asimov's stories) and books. Have students write essays on science fiction they've enjoyed, and then have them work individually or in groups to create their own science fiction masterpieces.

January 3, 1888 • Wax Paper Drinking Straws Patented

What better time to have students reveal their own inventive ideas? Have them diagram and write descriptions.

January 4 • Louis Braille's Birthday

Do a little research on how Braille came to invent this system of writing for blind people. Perhaps you know a blind person who would like to visit your classroom to share their knowledge of and skill in reading braille.

January 5 • George Washington Carver Day

Research this great Black American's life. Compare his methods and discoveries with Luther Burbank's. How has their work developed since these two great pioneers made their discoveries?

January 7 • Three of Jupiter's Moons First Seen by Galileo

This discovery threw into question the idea that all heavenly bodies rotate around the earth, for Galileo saw three moons rotating around Jupiter. Research the history of optics and how the telescope and microscope affected scientific inquiry and knowledge. How did the church respond to Galileo's insights? How is technology affecting scientific inquiry today?

January 14 • Albert Schweitzer's Birthday

Read about his life and write an essay supporting and criticizing his view that no living thing should be killed. What would the world be like if we followed his view?

January 15 • Martin Luther King Day

Consider the lives of the many martyrs who have died to make the world a better place. Discuss the nature of moral courage. Look at videos of Martin Luther King at work and read some of his speeches. Have students write their thoughts on the Black struggle for freedom and equality. Who are people living today who are engaged in a courageous struggle to win freedom for groups of people?

January 17 • Ben Franklin's Birthday

Research this remarkable man's life. You may want students to do jigsaw research. Have cooperative learning groups divide up areas of his life: Early years, middle years, later years, inventions, politics. Have each group write a report using the computer and then present their discoveries to the class. The report could be given as a first-person narrative, complete with costumes.

January 18 • Pooh Day—A. A. Milne's Birthday, Jan. 18, 1882

Read some of Winnie-the-Pooh's adventures out loud. Have students create their own Pooh adventures using Pooh-like characterization and dialogue.

January 19 • Edgar Allen Poe Night

Read some of Poe's terrifying poems and short stories, and let students take a turn at writing in this dark genre.

January 23 • Welcome Back, Sun!

Today, in Hammerfest, Norway, the sun rose after two months of night. During the summer, Norway will have two months of days with no night, which is why Norway is called The Land of the Midnight Sun. See if you can arrange pen pals for your class who live close enough to the Arctic Circle to experience this phenomenon.

January 24 • Eskimo Pie Patented

Work on other great food inventions. Perhaps students can make some and share them. What American companies have become famous for food inventions?

January 30 • Purple Cow Day—Birthday of Gelette Burgess

I never saw a purple cow,
I never hope to see one,
but I can tell you, anyhow
I'd rather see than be one!

SHOW BUSINESS

Stephen Marcus

"Knowledge is know business, and in know business there's no business like show business."

Such is the observation of graphics consultant Aaron Marcus. Marcus is a computer graphics specialist, a designer of interfaces, and a leading "visual language hacker." His concern is with the face of the interface.

Computer-using English teachers have a natural concern for the *voice* of the interface, the words on the screen (or in the hardcopy). As it turns out, one of the most exciting developments in educationally useful software these days is software that enables students and teachers to *combine* text with graphics, allowing students to process images as well as words. Teachers and students can develop their sensibilities as "information artists," attending to screen (and page) layout, typography, color and illustration. **Dazzle Draw, Designer's Pencil, Mousepaint, MacPaint, Print Shop** and others provide a wide assortment of particular tools. Utility programs like **MacPublisher** and **The Newsroom** aid in the creation of newsletters and newspapers. And, programs like **StoryBook** encourage and enable students to illustrate and animate their stories.

It's no wonder that one-third of the hands-on sessions at a recent educational computing conference focused on image processing software.

What this all means is that the computer is providing a new and wonderful dimension to the phrase "language arts." Just as word processors enable students to practice writing, to see their ideas "in print," without the debilitating effects of struggling with their own or others' handwriting, image processors allow us to produce professional-looking documents, even though our "drawing skills" may be in a state of arrested development.

Even in the world of commercial word processing, industry professionals like Arielle Emmett and Esther Dyson note that standards are changing to include "not just bar charts, but organizational charts, fancy fonts, proportional spacing, heavy and interesting use of graphics. Typewriting and underlining won't cut it anymore." Fortunately, we in the language arts can take a little less prescriptive perspective. We can feel free to explore, invent and discover exciting ways to help students illustrate, arrange and publish their writing.

Combine a stationery-designing program like **Print Shop** with a photocopying machine using, perhaps, some fancy paper from a "paper-by-the-pound" display in a book or stationery store. There is extraordinary potential here for allowing younger students to create a personalized vanity press. In a more informal area, the ease with which individually designed and "grown-up-looking" greeting cards can be created can be a powerful aid in encouraging students to write for a real audience: grandparents, cousins, aunts and uncles. The same can be said, of course, for the use of software that helps students write and illustrate stories. Writing and illustrating for publication makes the last stage of the composing process even more special. And with all these uses, it is particularly important, I think, to encourage students to develop their own design skills and not to depend solely on the teacher to create the materials. Students should be encouraged to discuss and recognize degrees of quality and effectiveness in the presentation of printed work.

There are, of course, problematic aspects of the computer-assisted combining of know business with show business. Some people worry that the use of ready-made

images will stifle creativity, or that the intimate relationship between the creator and the object created will be lost, with the computer somehow interrupting a natural flow from the person, through the hand and eye, to the paper. And there are some people, of course, who will use the kind of software mentioned above as a form of high-tech stencil. Every kid's cow or turkey will look like everyone else's. The computer will be enlisted to aid uniformity rather than diversity.

"It is particularly important, I think, to encourage students to develop their own design skills and not to depend solely on the teacher to create the materials."

There is legitimate cause for concern. At the very least, there are no *definitive* criteria for well designed documents–even though some people transform trends and personal preferences into design dogma. At the other extreme, there are those who are not visually oriented to begin with and who can't help but wonder what all the fuss is about. Nevertheless, while there is valid cause for concern, there is even greater cause for optimism. The new tools offer opportunities for broadening definitions of computer literacy and for extending it to a wider audience, to those whose creative impulses are not cowed, but are intrigued, by the technology.

Teachers have long practiced the posting of students' drawing and writing, as well as the sending home of their work. As in many other areas, computer assistance does not necessarily represent a new approach. What it does do is provide new powers and incentives. Unavoidably, in the short term, we'll be seeing lots of documents (papers, cards, fliers, newsletters, etc.) that need image as well as text editing. (As if things weren't bad enough, extraordinarily inept-*looking* memos are already becoming common.) In the long term, however, I think that more and more people will discover that word and image inform each other. Whether in as subtle a choice as type font or in the illuminating of manuscripts, the various dimensions of computer-assisted graphics expand and enrich the expressive repertoire of both students and teachers.

I can't resist: On with the show! ■

[Dr. Stephen Marcus, Associate Director, South Coast Writing Project, University of California, Santa Barbara, CA 93106.]

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continued from page 39—

A parent says, "My child is not learning skills

Mrs. Judson objected because the teacher had not marked all the errors in a paper. "In our family, we don't say, 'me and my sister.' "

"That made me a little itchy, too," responded the teacher. Then she explained that she emphasized one skill per paper. Using the folder, she showed Mrs. Judson Cheryl's overall improvement in skills during the year.

Although most of the students in *Writing* are elementary or intermediate age, the problems with which they struggle still plague the high school student and the adult writer. In the chapter, "See the Writing Process Develop," Graves parallels the same process ingredients in three writers: Mary, first grade; John, fourth grade; and his own writing as an adult. In narrative vignettes he follows the work from the choice of topic and rehearsal through the first composing and text revisions. The writers are on different levels, but the process is the same.

Voice is a major concern of Graves. Two drafts by Kristina, a professional writer, are printed side by side in two columns. Kristina takes away unnecessary information and heightens what is left with more detail. A comparison of her revisions shows her article developing "a new,

Charts, schedules, diagrams, statistics, sample teacher records—all the apparatus of research—occur where they can be helpful in presenting the generalizations drawn from the teachers' experiences. The focus in this very readable research product is always, "What is going on?" Throughout the book Graves communicates the same reassuring warmth that he shows in his workshops, a belief in the teachers in his audience, and in their capabilities.

"Writing demands discipline, the waiting response.... There is no hurry. There is only the need for the persistent, aided demand that the child may become what he wants to become. . . . The marvelous part about waiting for children, and helping them teach us, is what we learn ourselves. . . . The top teachers . . . have an insatiable appetite for learning. When teachers learn, the children learn."

Pat Parnell
Teacher/Consultant,
Northern Virginia Writing Project

[Reprinted by permission from The Quarterly of the National Writing Project and the Center for the Study of Writing, Vol. 6 #2, February 1984.]

THE COMPUTER, COOPERATIVE LEARNING & THE CALIFORNIA WRITING PROJECT

Alma Casey Allen

The most educationally rewarding experience I had this year was seeing my fifth grade students cheerfully and easily go through ALL the steps of the writing process using the word processor and cooperative learning. Students improved the quality of their writing by going through the sharing, revising and editing steps again and again. The quantity of their writing also increased, because they were working together and feeling successful.

Here are the six steps in the writing process and how we used them:

1. PREWRITING

Getting ideas together, usually through brainstorming and sometimes by using other materials and techniques such as role playing to set the stage for ideas.

2. WRITING

Getting ideas down in a given form on paper or using the word processor. For some given forms we set up a specific rubric for writing. For more creative writing we set up a more general rubric.

3. SHARING

Reading each other's writing in order to get feedback, both from peers and from the teacher. We sometimes use a read-around technique, but usually our sharing is made personal through direct oral communication. This sharing provides lots of motivation for rewriting and revising.

4. REVISING

Using feedback to improve the writing. Students sometimes glean additional ideas or more interesting words from other sources such as the teacher, peers or books.

5. EDITING

Students read their own work in order to identify and correct errors. Sometimes a peer or teacher checks the editing if desired.

6. EVALUATING

During this step, students receive final feedback from the teacher or peers, using a rubric or read-around for peer evaluation.

Writing and Word Processing

"My hand hurts...."
"Do we have to?"
"Oh no! Not that again!"

In my class, writing always came to a groaning halt when students were asked to recopy their work during the revising/editing step—or if they were asked to write more than once a day. The drudgery of editing and revising was killing my students' desire to improve their writing.

My students and I solved part of the problem by using the word processing part of **AppleWorks** to begin to write. Here are some of the good reasons my students and I found for using word processing when writing:

- The computer was a motivational tool. It wasn't just another writing assignment—it was another chance to use the computer.

- Revising was easier, and the more students revised, the better their writing became. Students found using the editing features of the word processor fun, rather than punishment.

- Using the computer gave students experience in working together, which helped their social relationships. Since students learned the word processing program as they went along, they enjoyed sharing the editing commands as they "discovered" them.

- Students' writing was easier to read when they were sharing or evaluating. Reading each other's handwriting was no longer a problem; they could focus more on the writing ideas they were evaluating. (A side benefit was that students were reading and comprehending more.)

- Their hands didn't get tired when writing and rewriting.

- Using the printer made it easy to make multiple copies of their writing for peer sharing, revision and evaluation.

Cooperative Writing Groups

Working cooperatively at the computer improved students' attitudes toward more than one daily writing assignment. These students had worked cooperatively in previous years, and this year students were working cooperatively in most other subject areas.

The groups were formed using the following process:

1. Heterogeneous groups were formed by the teacher.

2. Students were evaluated individually and as a group according to how well they:

   - Cooperated by staying on task.
   - Made input (everyone has valuable ideas if encouraged).
   - Encouraged others in the group.
   - Compromised and/or voted, and went along with the majority decision when disagreements occurred.
   - Tried to participate, even when they didn't feel they had anything to contribute (all students must contribute at least one thing to the cooperative writing assignment).
   - Asked for help from their group when needed (for instance, understanding paragraph form, transition words, proper punctuation, etc.).
   - Checked each other for understanding of each part of the assignment; taught each other when necessary.

   Each group was responsible for identifying leaders, encouragers, keyboarders, etc., if they wished to operate in that manner as a group.

3. Students were evaluated as a group on their group writing project.

4. Students were evaluated individually on a similar assignment, with the individual receiving two grades: one for his or her own work and one for the group's individual average (if a group has one person who can't write the assignment after participating in their group, the group is graded down for not checking and helping that person more).

Here are the advantages my students and I found to working cooperatively:

- Students said it made them feel more secure when writing an assignment, and that writing with a group made them feel their writing was more interesting than writing on their own.

- It made the thinking/writing process easier. Students said it was easier to think together. They discussed their ideas and rationales with others in their group, so they felt more secure when expressing those ideas or opinions in their writing. (In my class any idea or opinion is accepted as long as it can be justified.)

• One-third of the class were designated Chapter I, and consequently students were all learning writing at a different rate. When students began working cooperatively, every student's writing improved and especially the Chapter I students'. The end writing product from students writing together seemed to be a much better writing model for the later individual assignment than if I modeled the writing for the class.

• When students wrote in groups and then as individuals, they were much more successful with their individual products. And the individual success they found in their writing changed their attitude about writing. Very little groaning about writing is ever heard in this class.

• Cooperative grouping makes students more responsible for their own learning, and this ownership often makes for better retention.

• Cooperative learning is "teacher friendly." No more constant remediation conferencing with individual students.

• Students gained social skills and more understanding of each other, especially when sharing their individual writing ideas with their group. They began to trust each other more as they shared writing at very personal levels. This made them a nicer class.

• Students' ability to evaluate (the highest level of thinking) was strengthened as they were forced to evaluate their ability to cooperate, as well as their own writing and that of others in their group.

• Cooperative writing made students feel better about themselves. They said that others had to look at them when talking, and this made them feel important. They said others encouraged them, helped them and shared with them. One student made the comment that it was "finally okay to be himself." Two other students said they learned more self-control while working in groups.

• Students said they learned more when they worked in groups than on their own, because they were more on task—the group cooperation demanded it. They said they felt more responsible for themselves in the group.

Cooperative Group and Individual Writing Ideas for Writing Across the Curriculum

A DESCRIPTIVE PARAGRAPH ON AN OREO COOKIE
- followed by individual paragraphs describing a chocolate chip cookie

WRITE-A-ROUND STORIES
- followed by individual groups each doing a write-a-round story—looking for characters

A DIFFERENT ENDING TO A LITERATURE STORY
- followed by individual students writing a different ending to another story from their literature book

A REPORT ON THE SOUTHERN COLONIES (this is like snail writing, with the prewriting coming directly from another subject area)
- followed by each student writing a report on the New England or the Middle Colonies

JUSTIFYING THEIR POSITION ON SLAVERY
- followed by individuals writing and justifying their opinion on taxation in the colonies

UNDERSTANDING/KNOWING ORDERED PAIRS (taken from a lesson done in math earlier in the day)
- followed by individuals writing about their understanding of the different angles in geometry

A COMPARISION OF A SOWBUG AND A PILLBUG
- followed by each student writing a comparison of a gecko and an anole (both taken directly from just completed science observations)

A DESCRIPTION OF A FAVORITE CHARACTER IN TODAY'S STORY AND WHY IT IS THE GROUP'S FAVORITE
- followed on another day by individual students describing their favorite character in another story

(Alma Casey Allen, Staff Development/Technology Curriculum Specialist, ABC Unified School District, 16700 Norwalk Blvd., Cerritos, CA 90701.)

WRITING SKILLS WITH WRITE ON!

Jon Madian

WRITE ON! from Humanities Software is a collection of 54 writing activity disks designed to use word processing functions (insert, delete, block, move, display, print) to develop composing, revising and editing skills at grades K–12. All major areas of written language development are addressed: story, poetry, letter, journal, report and essay writing. While these activities-on-disk are designed to involve students in whole language behaviors, specific mechanical, vocabulary, spelling, revising and editing skills are also taught.

Primary Literature Collection K–4

In the **Primary Literature Collection** (grades K–4), the software turns the computer into a wonderfully flexible storyboard for small group or whole class writing activities. Forty of the most popular children's books and poems are bundled with this software and used as the inspiration for student writing patterns. After the teacher reads the story or poem to the students, the students, probably with the teacher, aide or volunteer typing in their answers, "write" their ideas. Included with the book-inspired writing patterns is a model group journal that students and teacher can modify. This approach to writing for young students capitalizes on children's natural excitement toward learning as they write a story or journal together.

For example, after the class reads *The Runaway Bunny*, children dictate or write their ideas about what they'd turn into in order to run away from their mothers. The following pattern appears on the screen and is repeated for each child in the class or group:

"Mommy, I'm going to become a _____,"
said N (child's name goes in N place).

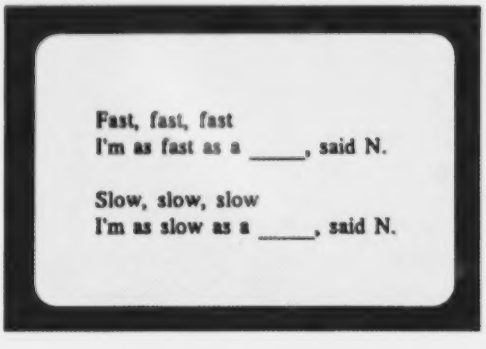
"N (child's name), if you become a _____,
I'll become a _____ and _____,"
said N's mother.

Thus, children see their words and names being written or, if they are ready to write at the keyboard, they simply fill in the blanks. Connecting students' ideas to a repeating pattern gives them the repetition they need for comprehension and success, and within the pattern, each child can express his or her unique ideas.

After each child in the group has responded, a printout is made which students illustrate. The activity culminates with each student sharing his or her individual page, or with teacher and students reading from a book containing everyone's illustrated ideas. What child will ever forget *The Runaway Bunny* after this! While all of these primary level programs are designed for group writing, they also lend themselves to use by individual students working alone or working with another student at the computer.

Elementary Collection K–5

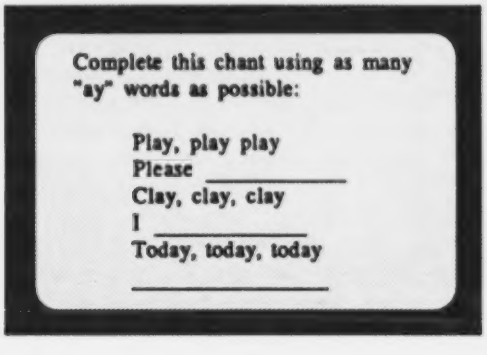
The **Elementary Collection** also contains several poetry activities designed to teach basic writing and reading skills. The chant, with its easy rhythmic pattern and repetitive structure, is the basic building block. So if students are learning similes, they will respond to a pattern on the screen that looks like this:



As it happens, this particular poetry activity is also keyed to a wonderful picture book called *Quick as a Cricket* by Audrey Wood.

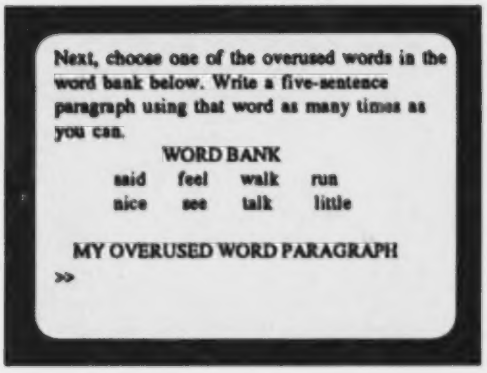
Or if children are working with the "ay" word family, they see all the simple "ay" words on the screen and are given a sample poem or an opening chant:

[AY WORDS: bay, day, gay, hay, jay, lay, may, nay, pay, ray, stay, way, away, slay, tray, clay, today]

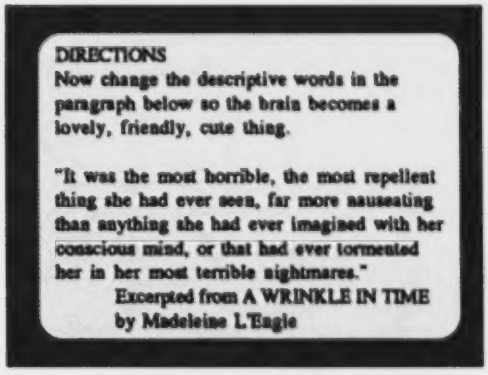


Intermediate Collection **5–8**
Secondary Collection **9–12**

Based on the classroom-tested language experience and writing as a process approaches, **WRITE ON! Intermediate and Secondary Collections** can be used to supplement any phase of the writing curriculum. Prewriting activities stimulate the flow of ideas and help students gather and select writing topics. Organizing activities teach students how to improve their writing through correct sentence, paragraph and theme structure. Writing activities enable students to practice composing on the computer while emphasizing types of writing style, point of view, etc. Rewriting/correcting activities teach rewriting and editing skills. Publishing activities result in a printed product that can be shared with others.


Next, choose one of the overused words in the word bank below. Write a five-sentence paragraph using that word as many times as you can.
WORD BANK
said feel walk run
nice see talk little
MY OVERUSED WORD PARAGRAPH
>>

In an activity from Paragraphs 6 *called Spicy Woods, students replace overused words with more colorful and descriptive language. Then they write and edit their own overused word paragraph.*


DIRECTIONS
Now change the descriptive words in the paragraph below so the brain becomes a lovely, friendly, cute thing.
"It was the most horrible, the most repellent thing she had ever seen, far more nauseating than anything she had ever imagined with her conscious mind, or that had ever tormented her in her most terrible nightmares."
Excerpted from A WRINKLE IN TIME by Madeleine L'Engle

In this step of an activity called Descriptive Language from the Intermediate Collection WRITING STYLE, students work with the language used by L'Engle as Meg encounters IT in A Wrinkle In Time.

The educational power of this collection is the teaching of basic writing skills at the application level using computer functions, and these skills are internalized through whole writing activities. While the educational utility of these activities is rooted in the advantages that word processor functions provide, these diskettes take into account that students may have limited computer time and that teachers and students may prefer doing some activities with paper and pencil. Included on the teacher side of the disks, along with a teacher activity guide, are activities to be done on hardcopy printouts.

This is the first educational software designed to take full advantage of the ideas embodied in desktop publishing—indeed, this is desktop curriculum! Teachers can adapt these activities to meet the needs of their students or to emphasize particular concerns. This collection should be continually growing and self refining. Humanities Software plans an expansion of five diskettes per month with a five year goal of over 250 diskettes. And they expect the new disks to come from needs and strategies identified in the classroom.

Karen Jostad, former Manager of Courseware Design at MECC is the educator and designer behind the **WRITE ON!** collection. She states:

"The **WRITE ON!** Diskettes realize their potential each time educators trying to solve particular problems see ways to adapt the strategies in these materials. In the end, we expect this to be a largely teacher authored library. We hope this first collection will help educators see new ways to use word processing."

This approach to computer assisted instruction takes us one step closer to aligning technology with the best current ideas in curriculum design and writing instruction. The **WRITE ON!** collection runs on all major educational word processors that run on the Apple—**Bank Street Writer, AppleWorks, Apple Writer, FrEdWriter, MECC Writer, The Writing Workshop,** and **Magic Slate**. This collection soon will be available for other computer systems. See the catalogue enclosed in this issue for more information about products and purchase plans. ■

A SCOPE AND SEQUENCE FOR STORY WRITING, Part 1

Jon Madian

Developing a scope and sequence for story writing is, in some sense, nonsense, since children just naturally elaborate upon their real and imaginary experiences. However, when we begin to help students put their story ideas into book form, perhaps there are a few principles of organization, theme, character and setting that will help lead them on, step by step. So, with the understanding that in some ways a scope and sequence of story writing is inimical to the holistic nature of story conception and expression, let's explore what may be some useful ideas in sequencing story writing and book making activities.

Is there a best place to begin story writing and book making? After a number of years of creating all kinds of books and stories with students, a possible structure has emerged. This structure takes as its organizing premise that the less plot, characterization and setting required, the simpler the story. It also assumes that there is a relationship between reporting real tales and invented ones.

1. Number and Alphabet Books

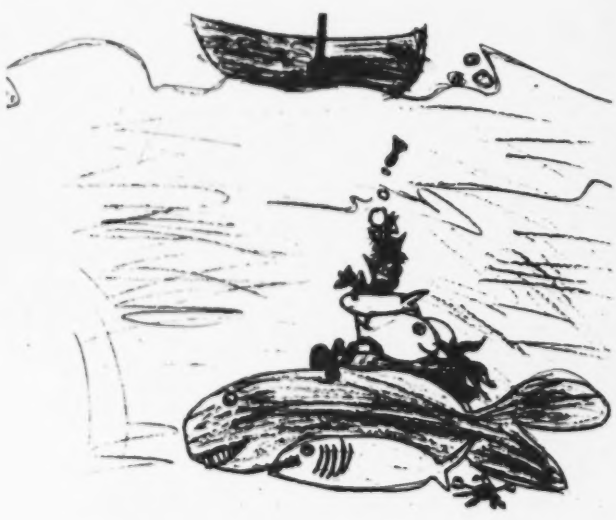
With the exception of the simple personal story or account such as "I went to the store and a dog barked and I dropped my candy and ran home," it seems likely that number and alphabet books are the simplest story form. This is because both number and alphabet books have no plot, characters or settings to deal with. Each page can have its own theme, or there may be a theme running throughout the book. Either way, on page one you will find something about the number "1" in a number book, and something about the letter "A" in an alphabet book. Five pages later in the number book, you'll learn about the number "5" and you'll learn about the letter "E."

Designing number and alphabet books can be an engaging design activity for all grades. They are a challenging design problem for the advanced writer, as well as for the beginner. Begin by having students look at and read as many of these kinds of books as possible. They'll see that there are many different approaches. You may want to use cooperative groups, so that two or more students are responsible for designing a page or an entire book. Finally, let students share their products with students in other classes or through their school library media center.

2. Stacking Stories

Next in complexity comes what we might call the "stacking story." *The House that Jack Built, A Fly Went By, There Was an Old Woman Who Swallowed a Fly* and *The Napping House* are all fine examples of stacking stories.

From this list of examples, you may have concluded that a stacking story involves having one object or animal stack upon, against or within another. Stacking stories are slightly more complex than number and alphabet books. While setting, character development and plot are still minimal, there is a sequential development that must be invented.

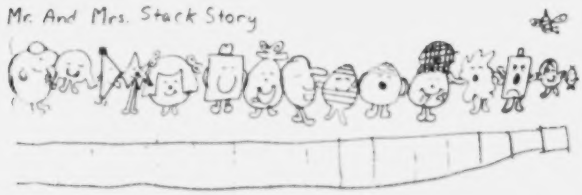


There are two different kinds of stacking stories—horizontal and vertical. *A Fly Went By* is an excellent example of a **horizontal** stacking story, where the sequence from smaller to larger is in the form of a chase. *The Napping House* by Audrey and Don Wood, on the other hand, is a beautifully illustrated and written vertical stacking story in which a pyramid of sleeping people and creatures is built and then exploded by the bite of a "wakeful flea."

To inspire students to write stacking stories, begin by reading as many as possible. Tell students that the creatures or objects in the stack will be determined by an environment or by a "creature theme"—for example, jungle, barnyard, underwater, forest, zoo, circus, Halloween, Christmas, prehistoric, bird, bug, school, closet or the kitchen.

As you read the stories, if it is a vertical stack, pay special attention to how the stack is disrupted or undone. There are only two kinds of decisions students need to make to create stacking stories: the nature or ecosystem of the stack (who goes in it) and how the stack is undone.

Stacking stories, like number and alphabet books, contain a basic pattern which progresses from page to page. Students enjoy working within this structure. They know where their story is going from the beginning. The stacking story provides tremendous opportunities to apply grouping and sequencing skills, as well as graphic and literary imagination.



Cooperative groupings work well for such a story. If there are going to be several creatures in the stack, each student can specialize in drawing certain creatures and other elements like the sun, clouds or a tree. Then students can design each page together, with each student contributing to each page.

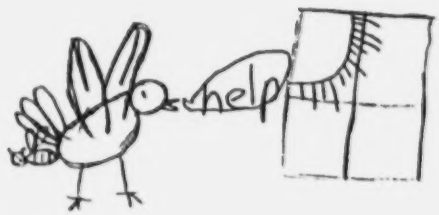
The choice of words can be very important. Good words for sleeping are very helpful in a vertical stacking story—words like snooze, doze, slumber, dream or nap. Other related words are: purr, cuddle, snuggle, rock, purr. Wake-up words may include: jiggle, tickle, wiggle, bite, sting and scratch.

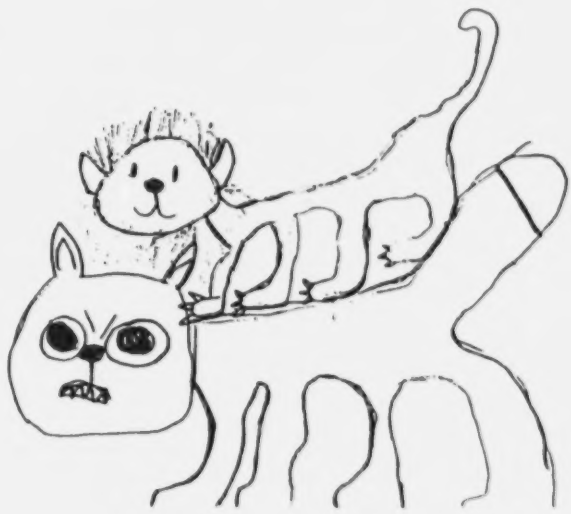
In a horizontal "eating" or "chasing" story, it is also important to brainstorm good verbs such as eat, bite, swallow, gulp, chew, inhale, slurp, drink, run, race, hop, skip, slither, slide, jump, crawl, stampede....

Here is an example of a stacking story by Rana, a second grader in the ABC District:

Animals Sleeping In the Sky

Once upon a time there was a goose sleeping on a cloud. Then came an eagle who thought it cozy and cuddley. So he slept on the goose's back. There was a bird flying by who saw the stack, so he layed on the eagle's back. Then came a black bee and stung the bird, who jumped on the eagle, who screamed and woke the goose, and then they fell on the cement and got hurt.





3. Animal Stories

After the stacking story, or perhaps at about the same level (and also among the beginning book patterns that children enjoy writing) are animal stories. Animal stories can be as simple or complex as the writer wishes. To expand your students' writing vocabulary, you may want to brainstorm words that relate to the animal they have chosen. What words describe how the animal looks, moves and behaves? To further involve students in their animal stories, you may want to have them write animal stories as part of an animal unit (see the Spring 1986 CWP). ■

[This article will conclude in the January/February issue.]

Poetry and Cooperative Learning Part 2

This two-part curriculum unit began in the September/October issue with a discussion and examples of the chant, acrostic, transformation and haiku poetry forms.

Simile

Simile takes students a step further into the world of imagery and symbolism. In future columns we will look at the vast world of symbolism and how to awaken awareness of symbolism in stories, poetry, songs, journals, and in visual media such as painting, film and television.

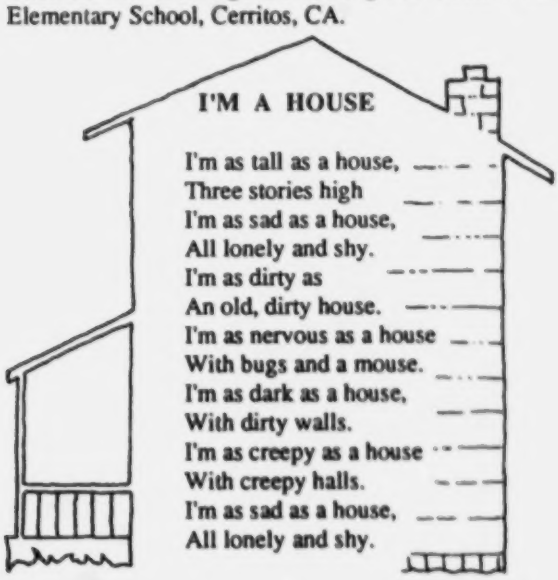
At a simple level you may ask students to write a poem in which they create several lines that complete one of these patterns:

"I am as _____ as a _____."
or
"My house is as _____ as a _____."

"Like" can be substituted for "as."
For example:

"I am like a _____."
"My room is like a _____."

Below is an example of a simile poem by Daniel Chen in Ms. Dominguez's third grade class, Wittman Elementary School, Cerritos, CA.



I'M A HOUSE

I'm as tall as a house,
Three stories high
I'm as sad as a house,
All lonely and shy.
I'm as dirty as
An old, dirty house.
I'm as nervous as a house
With bugs and a mouse.
I'm as dark as a house,
With dirty walls.
I'm as creepy as a house
With creepy halls.
I'm as sad as a house,
All lonely and shy.

Any of the cooperative strategies suggested earlier will work well. Students can take turns writing individual lines, so that each student can finish the simile he or she has begun. Students might work on one subject; for example, they might write a poem comparing themselves to water in lakes, oceans, streams, rivers and puddles.

Another approach is to have each student start the simile "My room is _____." The next student can finish it and begin a new line before passing the poem along. Other good subjects for similes in addition to houses, rooms and bodies of water are trees, stories, schools, games, pictures, food and books.

Metaphor

Metaphor takes students more directly into the world of imagery. A wonderful way to introduce metaphor is to have students revise their simile poems into metaphor poems by deleting the "as" or "like" words. "I am as lazy as a frog" changes into "I am a lazy frog." "I am angry like a fire" might become "I am an angry fire" or "I am a fire." If students have written their simile poems on the word processor, this revision will be effortless and quite satisfying.

Here we see Daniel's poem from above rewritten as a metaphor poem.

I'M A HOUSE

I'm a house,
Three stories high
I'm a house,
All lonely and shy.
I'm a house,
An old, dirty house.
I'm a house,
With bugs and a mouse.
I'm a house,
With dirty walls.
I'm a house,
With creepy halls.
I'm a house

Any of the cooperative learning strategies mentioned earlier will work well. A fun way to handle this might be to have one person say, "I am," and the next person completes the line with whatever comes to mind.

Free Verse

Free verse is poetry that finds its rhythmic and sound structure from within the imagery and theme of the poem. There are no external criteria. The writer is free to structure the poem in response to his or her own imagination, which in turn is driven by feelings, memories, ideas and language patterns. Free verse is highly individual, yet free verse can be written in groups of two or more simply by alternating lines or by brainstorming. Here is a poem written by three sixth graders who alternated lines:

GRADUATION

Well, it's almost time to graduate
To end this phase
I sort of feel I'm in a daze
I'm just looking forward to summer days
And no more school and no more rules
I want to lie on the beach
Time for swimming in the pool
But then I think of next year
I get scared
It's like starting all over
I've been here at Palms for six years
It won't be easy to shift gears
At least all my friends will be there
I'm glad I'm going on
I wish I could stay at Palms.

Perhaps the best cooperative activity for free verse is either collaborative writing, in which the entire group agrees upon a first line, second line, etc., or alternating lines, in which each student writes from within the privacy of his or her own imagination in response to the previous line or lines.

A variation of this is for a student to write an entire poem on the word processor. The next student then rewrites as much or as little as he or she chooses. A third student could follow the second and so forth, until the original writer returns to see what has become of his or her creation. You can decide whether or not to allow students to do a final rewrite, or you may leave that up to the original poet.

Evaluation

One of the greatest contributions of the cooperative learning movement are the student group evaluation strategies—strategies that enable students to evaluate themselves, their process and their products. Cooperative learning has also delineated some strategies and criteria for teachers to use in evaluating group process. Although the criteria for evaluating group process should work well for poetry, you will want to carefully consider whether (and how) to evaluate poetry as a product. Most people involved in teaching poetry prefer not to grade or evaluate their students' poetry, other than giving feedback about what the reader feels works well or works less well. ■

CWP ON THE COLLEGE CAMPUS

Anne Auten

As I write this column, I am sitting plunk in the middle of the dog days of August; as you read this, however, my Introduction to Quantitative Methods 110 class and I will have embarked on the writing project I am about to describe. But first, a bit of background.

For the past two semesters I have required a full-blown paper—complete with endnotes and bibliography—from my undergraduate students, many of whom are budding CPAs and system analysts, with a peppering of computer science, economics and psychology majors. A small component of QM 110 (an introduction to data processing and BASIC programming) is an analysis of the impact of technology on society.

In the spirit of a conference on human values and the computer revolution that I attended in October 1983 at Ohio University/Athens, I have been slowly increasing the size of that component. The keynote speaker at the conference, cosponsored by the university's departments of philosophy and English, was Joseph Weizenbaum, self-professed pacifist and computer scientist at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and author of *Computer Power and Human Reason*. Questions addressed at the conference, which was open to the general public, ranged from "Will computers alter the meaning of being human?" to "How will your community be changed by the Computer Revolution?"

Included among the affective learning outcomes for QM 110 is the piquing of student consciousness on a variety of the issues addressed at that 1983 conference still under discussion today: how to combat cyberphobia or intimidation by machine, definitions of computer literacy, robotics and job displacement, impact of the electronic cottage, computer crime, copyright and software piracy, an individual's right to privacy, and computers and the handicapped, among others.

"While their literature reviews were thorough enough, their work lacked the kind of thoughtful reaction to the issues that demonstrated they had really chewed them over. So . . . this semester I will try a heavy dose of prewriting to give them time to chew."

To achieve that outcome, I have required that students complete a literature search of their choice of one of the above topics, word process a review of that literature and their reaction to it, and present a 10-minute summary of their findings to the class, complete with a follow-up question and answer period. Their papers were submitted as double-spaced, wide margined first drafts; I spent what seemed like weeks writing lengthy responses to these drafts (I had two sections of 35-40 students each), returned them for students to revise, and then graded their final drafts.

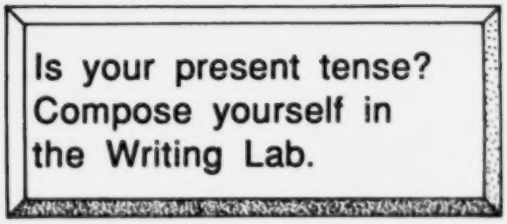
I experimented each semester with different ways of responding to their first drafts, from correcting anything that even remotely resembled an error to offering broad, general suggestions on organization or style. No specific feedback strategy seemed to guarantee successful student papers. While their literature reviews were thorough enough (thanks to the college's low-cost online data base search service and complete collection of ERIC indexes), their work lacked the kind of thoughtful reaction to the issues that demonstrated they had really chewed them over. So . . . this semester I will try a heavy dose of prewriting to give them time to chew.

As we begin the semester, the students will decide on an issue of their choice, either from my list of suggestions or from their own interests, but related to the general topic of the impact of technology on society. They will then write initial reactions to their issues in notebooks purchased expressly for that purpose, and I will respond in the same notebooks. We will dialogue on their issues regularly in their notebook "journals" for six weeks or so, after which they will begin their literature reviews. They will collect their research notes in the same notebooks, turning them in regularly for my reactions for another six weeks. I'll then give them the same criteria for their written reports that I have used previously, and invite those who feel comfortable with public speaking to present brief, oral report summaries.

Based on the large body of research that has reported the benefits of journal writing, conferencing and extensive prewriting exercises, this strategy should indeed produce thought-filled and thoughtful student papers. I will report in a later column how my hypothesis holds up, and I again encourage you to share in this column your experiences with creative word processing on your college campus. Send material to Anne Auten, P.O. 5017, College of St. Thomas, 2115 Summit Avenue, St. Paul, MN 55102. I look forward to hearing from you! ■

HAZELWOOD WEST WRITING LAB: A Center of Excellence

Anne Wright



So reads the sign outside the door of the Writing Lab at Hazelwood West. In the three years since the Writing Lab opened, hundreds of students have come here to "compose" themselves. The Writing Lab, instituted in the fall of 1983 at Hazelwood West High School, St. Louis County, MO, is staffed by two English teachers who work in the lab three hours each and teach two classes in composition. We also have a full-time teacher assistant. West's Writing Lab was designated by NCTE as a National Center of Excellence in November 1985. We think the success of our lab is due to a number of factors that make it unique.

First, we have a philosophy that governs all our activities. We believe that all students have a wealth of experiences to write about and that they are capable of writing about them, given the attention they need to get started. Therefore, the most important purpose of our Writing Lab is to provide the individual attention that classroom teachers do not have the time to provide. We know from student response that the one-to-one instruction and encouragement they receive in the Lab is the reason many of them come back time after time. One student said to a newspaper reporter who was at school interviewing the lab staff about our success, "No one has to worry about a writing assignment any more, because the kids all know they can go to the Writing Lab for help if they get stuck. The Writing Lab has revolutionized our school!" Honestly, we didn't pay that boy, and we had no idea he was going to give us such an endorsement, but I think he was expressing the attitude many students have about the value of the Writing Lab.

Second, the staff provides a wide range of services to students and teachers. Although our schedule is set up on a teacher-referral basis, many students come in on their own initiative, now that they know all the services available in the Writing Lab. We help students brainstorm ideas, revise papers, edit papers, write research papers on a word processing program **AppleWriter**, compose resumes, prepare college applications, polish essays for scholarship applications, and plan speeches. In other words, they can get help with any writing problem.

The lab also serves as a center for writing contests. We post all contest announcements and frequently run announcements in the daily bulletin. Students are encouraged in their English classes to enter contests, but the classroom teacher does not have to worry about the endless details of deadlines and contest requirements. We help the students edit their papers, and we print all final copies on a letter quality printer. During the three years we have been in operation, a number of students have won contests and some have had pieces published. One tenth grader who won a Veterans Day essay contest received a $300 savings bond and was invited to join the mayor of St. Louis and the Lt. Governor of Missouri on the reviewing stand for the Veterans Day parade. Last year, two of our juniors had papers chosen for publishing in *Missouri Youth Writes*, a publication of the Missouri Association of Teachers of English. A deaf student wrote a paper about deaf people following "normal" occupations. We entered his paper in the journalism contest sponsored by the Governor's Committee for Employment of the Handicapped and in the Southeast Missouri State University Writing Contest. He won second place in both and was invited to the state capital to a banquet, where he received a $100. bond. These kinds of experiences increase a student's self-confidence and inspire other students.

Another activity, initiated in the spring of 1985, is the publishing of a literary magazine for the school. The staff did all the editing and layout the first year, but this year, under the sponsorship of a lab staff member, a Writing Club was founded. The major activity of the club is to publish the literary magazine. In its first year we had no idea how successful such a publication would be. We knew we wanted a wide representation and a low price. Our principal said it could be underwritten the first year by student activity funds and suggested that we only order 300 copies (we have a school population of 1600). We sold them for $1.00 per copy, which was slightly under cost, and we were elated when the 300 sold out the second day they were on sale! The principal allowed us to order a second printing of 100, which we also sold.

We do not reject any writing turned in for the literary magazine. We make editorial suggestions and ask the students to revise. All students who revise their papers and return them to us have their work published. We believe it is far more important to publish the work of as many students as possible than to present only a select few of the highest quality.

We also invite teachers and other staff members in the building to submit work for the literary magazine. Last year, 11 teachers were published. We believe that this example encourages students. It lets them know that teachers write and that they consider this publication worthwhile. We know the students enjoyed the teachers' poems, stories and essays as much as those of other students.

Word processing on Apple IIe computers is another activity that goes on almost constantly in our Writing Lab. We started with one computer and have gradually increased the number to twenty-five. Many students who come for assistance in writing want to write their papers on the word processor before they leave. Others, especially from journalism classes, come specifically to use the computers. Students who have used word processing once almost always return to write other papers on the computer.

Many of the activities described for students are also open to teachers (individual assistance and contests, in particular), but we also provide some services specifically for teachers. The lab has a comprehensive library on teaching writing to which we add new publications each year. These publications include many published by NCTE and several authored or co-authored by National Writing Project Fellows. We also prominently display the *National Writing Project Newsletter*. We encourage teachers to check out these books and periodicals for use in planning their writing assignments. Sometimes I make posters to put in the department center highlighting a "Book of the Month."

Teachers may also bring whole classes to the Writing Lab to use the computers for a writing assignment. When they do, the staff reserves the Apple computer room, which has 22 Apple IIs, for their use for as many days as the teacher requests. We have a separate room where we have staff desks, the professional library, student resources and two computers. We can continue our tutoring functions there while the classroom teacher conducts class in the Apple Lab.

We also keep one computer, monitor and disk drive on a portable cart so that teachers can take them to their classroom. Included with this set-up is a large (25") screen monitor on another cart. With this combination teachers can type on the computer, watching what they are doing on the small monitor, while the class can watch the large monitor. This is the best way I have found to actually demonstrate certain kinds of writing skills to students; I have found this method especially useful for teaching revision and synthesizing skills.

We also offer to teach teachers how to use the computers for word processing. They can come in during their planning and conference periods for instruction. Those who have learned how to do word processing are true converts; they keep coming back and they also send more students. We are currently seeking a grant under Missouri's recently passed Excellence in Education Act to conduct a two-week workshop for teachers in the Language Arts Department. Our goal is to help teachers understand how computers can be useful tools in the teaching of writing.

Teachers from other departments are also encouraged to use the Writing Lab. They may ask staff members to come to their classes to teach students how to write a particular paper, or they may send individual students to the lab for help. English teachers are given priority, but we have some social studies teachers and science teachers who send their students frequently and others who regularly invite one of the lab staff to come to their classes. One advanced biology teacher sends students to the lab to prepare the papers that must go with their Science Fair entries. Social studies teachers frequently ask one of the lab staff to come to their classroom to teach students how to take essay tests, write an editorial, or prepare a bibliography for a paper. Last semester I met with the social studies teachers in one of their after-school department meetings to explain to them what kinds of writing English teachers emphasize at each grade level, so that their social studies assignments could be prepared with reasonable student expectations.

The Writing Lab at Hazelwood West has become what we like to call it—The Write Place. ■

Anne Wright is an instructor in the Hazelwood West High School Writing Lab and is Co-director of the Gateway Writing Project, St. Louis, Missouri.

[Reprinted by permission from The Quarterly of The National Writing Project, Vol. 8 #3, June 1986.]

Cooperative Learning:
Using the Jigsaw Technique to Learn APPLEWORKS

This activity is excerpted by permission from ***Learning Cooperatively with Computers: An Activity Guide for Teachers*** *by Mary Male, Roger Johnson, David Johnson and Mary Anderson. For further discussion from this book and another activity using the jigsaw strategy (Using* ***Newsroom*** *to Publish a Newspaper), see the September/October issue of* ***THE WRITING NOTEBOOK: Creative Word Processing in the Classroom.***

AppleWorks is an integrated software program that includes three components: spreadsheet, data base and word processing. The program allows the user to share information among these three components. Designed as a productivity tool, the program can be used with **sample files** (which students can modify and upon which they can base inferences and make predictions); **templates** (into which students insert information); or as a **tool for thinking** (students generate the format and solutions for their own problems).

Subject: Problem solving, critical thinking, language and conceptual development.

Grade level: 7 and up

Objectives:

A. Students will be able to use data base management, spreadsheets and word processing to solve simulated problems.

B. Students will be able to use data base management, spreadsheets and word processing to solve problems in their own life or in school situations.

Materials Needed: **AppleWorks** startup, program and Sample Files disks; data disks; pencils and paper.

Time required: 15–20 one-hour sessions

Procedures:

A. Preparation

1. Assemble needed materials.

2. Make sure you know how to use **AppleWorks**. Plan to spend some time with the **AppleWorks** tutorial, take a short course, or consult with a colleague. It is not a difficult program, but its power makes it seem complicated. You will feel more confident if you have an initial grasp of how it works. You will also find it helpful to develop simplified "cue sheets" for students as you go along.

B. Set

1. Tell students the objective of the lesson.

2. Discuss with students "A Pie Factory," the situation used in **AppleWorks'** Sample Files, with the accompanying problems and information needed. Students will be learning in teams those skills that could very well come in handy in a number of real life situations at school, at home, or in a job. The goal is for students to identify the problem situations in which **AppleWorks** might be useful and to create solutions using **AppleWorks**.

C. Input

1. Review with students the basic concepts of data base and word processing, which they have already used successfully in previous lessons.

2. Introduce spreadsheets. Provide a definition and then give examples, first on the blackboard or on paper and then on the computer.

3. Ask students to identify times when spreadsheets might be useful; for example, starting a class business, raising funds for a field trip or practicing basic math skills.

4. Demonstrate examples of spreadsheets and how one is developed, modified, saved and printed.

5. Give students practice examples of spreadsheet problems on paper. Discuss the advantages in using the computer for problems. (You can ask the question "What if...?" without redoing all your work or messing up another piece of paper.)

6. Assign students to three-person heterogeneous teams.

7. Give instructions. "First, you will meet with your team to decide who is going to be an expert on each of the three skills (spreadsheets, data bases and word processing) using **AppleWorks**, a program that combines all three into one program. Second, you will review some information about the skill you

have selected. Third, you will meet with an Expert Group, in which you will have a chance to learn and practice your skill with people from other teams who are learning, too. I will meet with each Expert Group to get you started and to make sure that you can perform the skill, so that you can teach the others in your group how to do it, too."

8. Set group goal. "Each person on the team must be able to use **AppleWorks** to do all three types of problems—spreadsheets, data bases and word processing. I will be calling on one person from each team to demonstrate one of the three skills, and in order for your team to earn points, you will each need to be able to do it, since you will not know whom I will call on."

D. Guided practice

1. Students meet with their teams to choose Expert Topics (spreadsheets, data bases or word processing) and to receive background information and cue cards.

2. Students move to their assigned expert group. Teacher moves from group to group giving step-by-step instruction and assistance. (It is ideal to have a parent volunteer, aide or student assistant knowledgeable in **AppleWorks** to help with each Expert Group. An additional possibility is to stagger the schedule of Expert Group meetings, so that the teacher can give undivided attention to one Expert Group at a time.)

3. After several Expert Group sessions, students return to their team. The expert on spreadsheets spends several class sessions teaching teammates **AppleWorks**' spreadsheet component.

4. The expert on data bases teaches teammates next. After several sessions, the expert on word processing introduces **AppleWorks**' word processing.

5. When all the groups have completed the basics of all three skills, the teacher presents some practice examples that require the use of all three (included in the **AppleWorks** Sample Files disk and the tutorial).

6. Students return to their teams to work on additional practice problems.

7. Teacher moves from team to team observing group process and how well groups are working together. Teacher also may assist with questions on target skills, if team members are sure that they need help.

E. Closure

1. Teacher summarizes the three skills and then calls on students at random to demonstrate a particular command within a particular skill; for example, "Find out what would happen if sales of apple pies went up by 50%."

2. Teacher calls on students to summarize briefly that skill and the necessary steps.

3. Teacher leads a discussion of how well the groups worked and asks students what they liked best and least about learning the skills in teams. Special recognition points are awarded to teams that worked particularly well together.

F. Independent practice

1. Students continue to practice and expand their skill within their Expert Topic.

2. Students are available to serve as peer tutors for students in other classes who are learning **AppleWorks**.

3. Students generate additional problem situations that can be solved using **AppleWorks**. ■

Encouraging Writing in Grades 4-8

Story Tailor Library and Story Tree are two software programs that just may spark writing in your classroom this year!

Story Tailor Library

The unique feature of this library from Humanities Software is that you can easily place the students from your class into the text of a poem or story. The wide range of materials, currently for grades K–8, include holiday poems and stories, fairy tales, myths and basal-oriented stories. All of these materials are designed to engage students' imaginations and to connect the processes of reading and writing.

In **Story Tailor Library**, students and teacher can revise the text to better suit their tastes. Such revision can be done by students in cooperative writing groups. The stories and poems are written to model particular writing techniques that students can and will imitate.

Story Tailor Library contains story math problems that can be rewritten; and stories based upon classical fairy tales, myths and fables. There are also stories which require students to apply the scientific method to problem solving. Many of the stories integrate science, history, literature and creative writing.

At the simplest level are stories, poems and writing activities for primary grade students. For higher grades there is a 32-chapter serialized story, "The Magic Tumbleweed," and sophisticated poems, dialogues and other stories.

The development of the stories and research that have gone into **Story Tailor Library** have been funded by nearly one million dollars from the U.S. Department of Education, California Arts Council and numerous foundations. These materials and related strategies have been developed, field tested and revised during a ten-year period.

Twistaplots with Story Tree

Twistaplots are a "literary" fad. Students seem to devour reading them, and they enjoy trying their hand at writing them. Scholastic's **Story Tree** is an ideal tool for generating twistaplot stories. One can imagine professional twistaplot writers being enormously grateful to have this program. And one can imagine a class of sixth graders creating a publishable twistaplot tale using **Story Tree**.

An ideal approach to such a unit would be to have students read a few twistaplots and discuss the techniques used by the writers. Then divide them into cooperative learning groups and have them write their own stories. Four people per group might be ideal. Since the story goes in four possible directions at each decision point, each team member would be responsible for writing one direction.

Another approach would be to have eight or sixteen in each group, with subgroups of two or four students to write each of the sections created by the choices.

If students read some of the personalized stories from the **Story Tailor Library** while they are reading twistaplots, they will see ways to write twistaplot tales that include the names of classmates. Writing twistaplots using **Story Tree** seems like an ideal activity for grades five or six and up. It will engage the most resistant writers. It can be a year long project. And it is naturally facilitated by cooperative learning groups. ■

GROUP ROLE EVALUATION SHEET
Reaction to Group Work

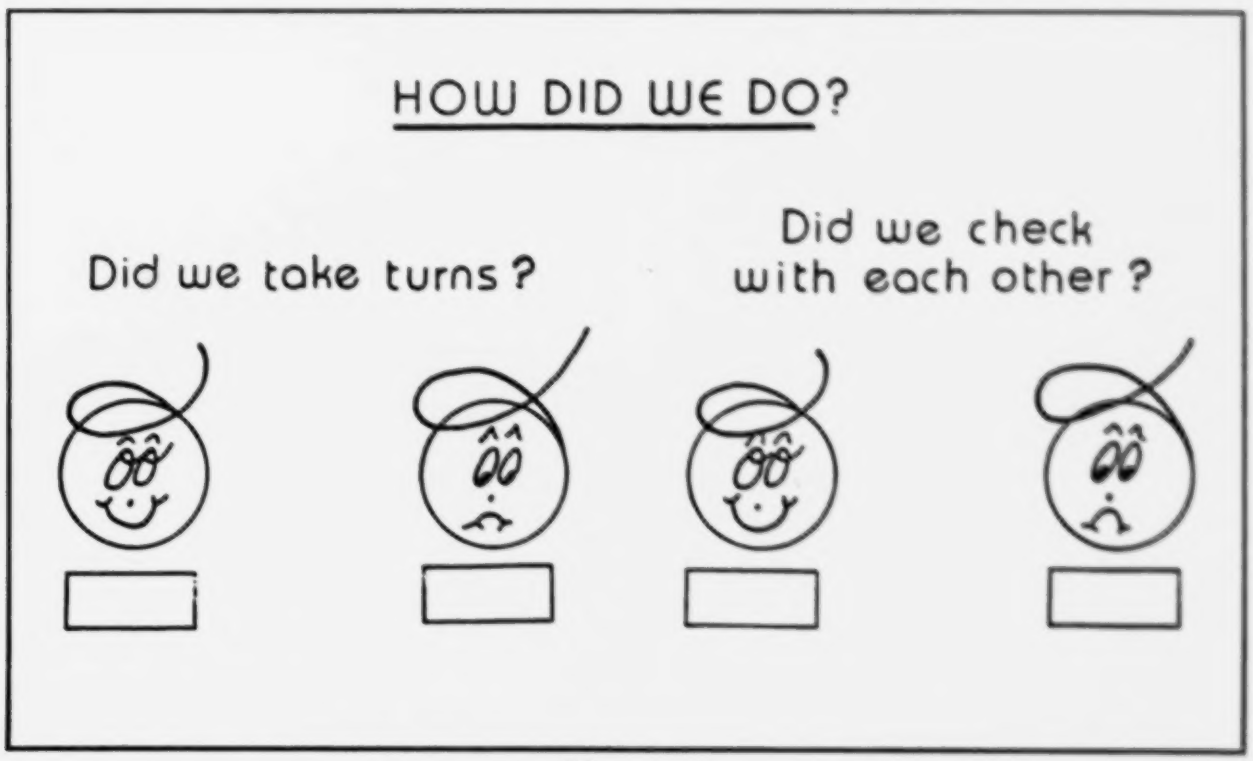
Today, as a group, we:	YES	NO
1. Accomplished our goal	_____	_____
2. Helped each other add or clear up ideas	_____	_____
3. Felt good about working together	_____	_____

As a group member I acted as:	MOSTLY	A LITTLE	NONE
- Idea generator	_____	_____	_____
- Encourager of others	_____	_____	_____
- Clarifier of ideas	_____	_____	_____
- Summarizer	_____	_____	_____
- Record keeper	_____	_____	_____

- Something that I did to make the group feel better about working together: _____
- Something that I did to make the group more successful in doing its work: _____
- Something that I'll work on next time: _____

Other members who:
- Added ideas _____
- Encouraged others _____
- Summarized or clarified _____
- Kept records _____
- Were very quiet _____

Developed by Judith A. Hay, St. Clair, Michigan. Appears in ***Structuring Cooperative Learning Experiences in the Classroom****, P. Roy (ed.), 1982.*



GROUP SKILLS SHEET

1. How carefully did we check?			
2. Did we help each other?			
3. Did we encourage each other?			
4. Did we finish our work?			
5. How well did we teach?			

What was your group good at?

Comments ta da

Group Members Sign

A Review of SHOW TIME
MECC's new play-writing tool for grades 6–9

Shirley Keran

I recently heard an address by Dr. Charles S. Slap, in which he made the point that until about 40 years ago, our culture was transmitted through the medium of print. Now, since the advent of television, culture is transmitted through images—rapid, successive images that do not require that the viewer react, consider or *do* anything. Whether the focus is on nuclear disarmament or the number one detergent, the images come in fast, digestible segments. Dr. Slap's speech made me think...and with it in mind I begin this review of **Show Time**, a new release from MECC.

Like television, **Show Time** entertains. It is listed as a tool for grades 6–9, but kids, Watch Out! Adults will get their hands on this one—it's FUN!! Unlike television, the accompanying images, however charming or quaint, are always secondary. The underlying work of the computer program is to produce printed words—to encourage the child's own language in the form of monologue and dialogue to translate the intended ideas. Here the child's imagination controls the images, instead of the images controlling the child's mind.

Be aware—**Show Time** does not purport to teach the art of play writing. It does not teach characterization or plot development or the myriad conventions and techniques of a dramatic production. Here's what it does do.

Show Time, a play-writing tool for grades 6–9, has four "working parts." This article defines working part as something requiring the user to DO something. Three of the working parts, "Pick a Cast," "Build the Set" and "Create Music" may at first appear mechanical and simplistic. But are they? "Pick a Cast" has 14 top, 10 middle and 8 bottom parts (heads, torsos and legs), which can combine in more than 1,100 ways to suggest types of ethnic, period and genre characters. "Build the Set" has 4 backdrops to make a basic stage and 30 props to set a stage. Since props can be reused and placed in various locations, props can be combined in unique and interesting ways in order to contribute original effects to a setting. "Create Music" has three melody lines which can be incorporated into the script as background music, but the more imaginative option is the Music Editor, which allows the user to compose melodies.

The fourth working part is "Write/Edit a Script." With the integrated word processor, the child writes a script and incorporates commands (stage commands) to tie all the various parts together to produce a **Show Time** play. The four working parts are separate options that can be entered and exited as many times as the user wishes or until the child thinks individual parts are "right" and a play is to be rehearsed.

The upper three-quarters of the computer screen is a curtained stage. The bottom quarter is the prompter's box, where script lines are displayed while colorful "speaking" characters move about on the stage obeying the user's typed commands. While a play is in rehearsal, any incorrect command interrupts the onstage action, and the Director's Critique wil inform the user about the problem to be fixed in the script. A play must pass review in rehearsal before it can make it through Opening Night.

A 23-page manual gives teachers tips on using **Show Time** in the classroom and full instructions on creating play (data) diskettes and the operation of the program. Ease of use was a major design consideration in the development of **Show Time** to ensure that the program would be a usable, reusable play-writing tool.

Show Time is demanding. It requires a student or a group of students to select or create separate elements—sounds and images—and to bring these elements together through printed words. The student's own words, not canned dialogue, drives the action on stage. Color images suggest character, setting and place only as well (or as poorly) as the playwright's script. Expect that students, like playwrights, will be stimulated, frustrated, excited, discouraged and rewarded by the experience. ■

Show Time, Apple IIe or IIc, $49. Minnesota Educational Computing Corporation, 3490 Lexington Avenue North, St. Paul, MN 55126.

Shirley Keran is a freelance writer and software design consultant.

BOOK REVIEW

WRITING: TEACHERS AND CHILDREN AT WORK

by Donald Graves
Heinemann Educational Books, 1983

In the introductory acknowledgments of *Writing: Teachers and Children at Work*, Donald Graves tells of writing parts of the book in Scotland, surrounded by piles of data, video equipment, a typewriter and tapes. A Scottish neighbor, surveying the cluttered scene, said in his Scot's burr, "Ah, Don, wouldn't ya rather be writin' a love story?"

Writing IS a love story. It glows with Graves' love of children, of writing and of teaching. For those of us fortunate enough to have attended a Graves workshop, *Writing* is an extension of that experience. His calm, wise voice sounds on every page. Readers still unacquainted with Donald Graves will delight in encountering his warm, caring, supportive personality and his gentle humor.

In a workshop session on teacher researchers, Graves advised, "Say what you saw." Following this principle, *Writing*'s narratives present information gathered from videotapes, notes of classroom observations, tape recordings, student writings and teacher records. Graves' "how-to" comments grow out of his demonstrations of successful techniques. Reading *Writing* is like visiting a classroom to observe a good teacher in action, accompanied by a knowledgeable mentor to point out all the subtleties that might otherwise be missed.

Usually when I read articles on teaching, I finish in frustration. Yes, the results sound good, but how did the authors achieve them? What actually happens in the classroom? The most valid theories are no good to me if I can't make them work. With Graves' narrative presentations, I can follow teachers step by step as they solve problems familiar to all teachers. In these excerpts I have retained as much as I could of Graves' own voice.

What do I do on Day One of a writing program?

Pat, who hated teaching writing, strode to the front of the room and said to her students, "I'm going to write and I need help." With an easel and large sheets of newsprint, she began to brainstorm topics for writing. An hour later she reported, elated, "They suggested words, asked questions, all the things that really helped."

How do I manage writing conferences with thirty students in the class?

Betty Altman didn't appear to be in a hurry. But after five minutes she had already had conferences with six children. Head lowered, she moved quietly from child to child, spending about forty seconds per child, responding to their writing. In these responding conferences, Graves says, "receive the student work in such a way that the child is teaching you about what he knows."

After rounds, Betty met with four students scheduled for more extensive conferences. As she worked with them, she sat with her back to the wall looking down through the long room to see how the other 26 students were working during writing time. In these conferences the children hold the papers, keeping control of their work. Betty is prepared to wait for the child's response to her questions. Fifteen seconds is a luxury for the child, Graves says. The child knows silence means it is his time to formulate a response.

How can I utilize student folders?

In addition to holding all the students' writing, folders are used to record completed student work, achievement in skills and topics for future writing. If Jason finishes while everyone else is still working, he checks his folder list, "Some new ideas to write about," and begins work on his next composition. The teacher reviews the work in the folders to prepare for student observations and for parent and student conferences. One teacher said, "The folders speak for themselves. Take a look in any folder and you will know how the children are changing."

What about spelling?

Students do not stop writing because they can't spell a word. They use invented spellings, writing a word by sounds. Or they leave a blank to be filled in later. Before the teacher conference, students circle all words they think may be misspelled. Students learn the value of correct spelling when their readers, their classmates, say, "We can't read your words."

continued on page 20.

THE Writing NOTEBOOK

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BULLETIN BOARD

- **LET'S TALK COMPUTERS... IN WRITING** is a Model Dissemination Project in language arts funded by the Educational Technology Unit of the California State Department of Education. It was developed to enable teachers of low-achieving students in grades 1–8 to use computers to improve writing skills. The program works within California's well developed State Framework for Writing. For more information, including staff development and a handbook ($23.20 including tax and shipping), contact Sharon Blakely, Project Director, Let's Talk Computers...in Writing, Crest View School, 18052 Lisa Lane, Huntington Beach, CA 92646; ph. 714/841-6117.

- **HUMANITIES SOFTWARE is looking for:**
  - Test sites (K–12 and special populations) to field test new products under development for the **WRITE ON!** collection (see article on p. 24).
  - Authors to develop on-disk writing activities for the **WRITE ON!** collection.
  - Educator-distributors at local and state levels.

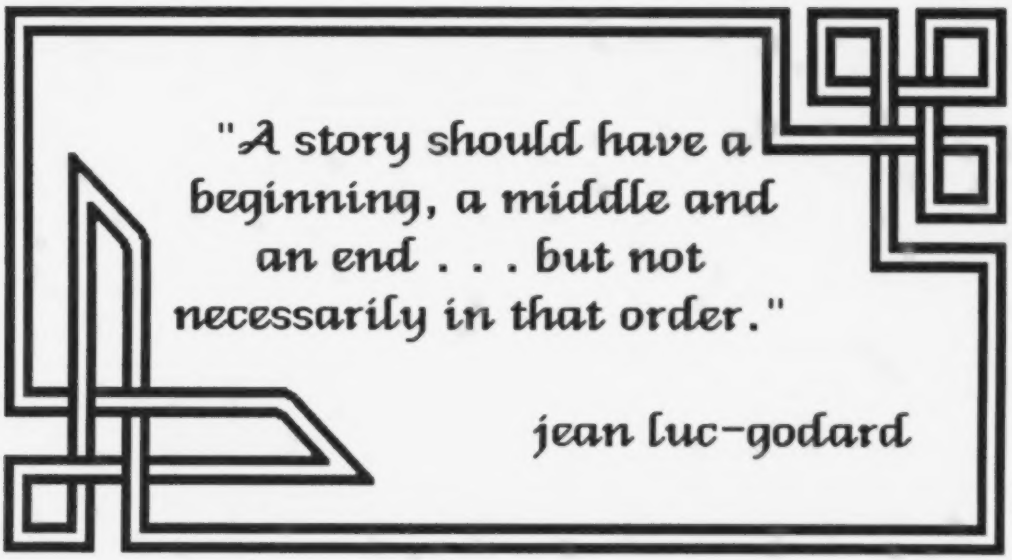
  For more information, contact Karen Jostad, President, Humanities Software, 19723 South Katherine Court, Cerritos, CA 90701; ph. 213/402-8231.

- **TEACHERS & WRITERS COLLABORATIVE**'s new catalogue is better than ever! Write to them at 5 Union Square West, New York, NY 10003.

- **NCTE** continues to publish and offer wonderful books about the writing process. National Council of Teachers of English, 1111 Kenyon Road, Urbana, IL 61801.

- **The Quarterly of the National Writing Project** and **The Center for the Study of Writing** is a resource worth knowing about! Write them at Bay Area Writing Project, School of Education, University of California, Berkeley, CA 94720.

- **HEINEMANN** has a good catalog of books on the writing process theory and practice. Write to: Heinemann, 70 Court Street, Portsmouth, NH 03801; ph. 603/431-7894.


"A story should have a
beginning, a middle and
an end . . . but not
necessarily in that order."
jean luc-godard

THE Writing NOTEBOOK

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January/February 1987
Creative Word Processing in the Classroom

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Who's Who

Here are just some of the interests of **CWP** during the coming year. All of the people listed below are supporting **CWP** this year as members of the **CWP Editorial Advisory Board**, and many of them as contributing editors/ networkers on specific topics.

Our profound thanks to each of these people. And we encourage you, as readers of **CWP**, to support topics of interest to you by sending in *your* ideas, articles and activities!

WORDS AROUND THE WORLD: THE WRITING PROCESS, KIDS' PUBLISHING & BOOKNET
Peter Anderson. Peter is a creative writing and composition teacher in Sharon, VT. He recently travelled around the U.S. and Europe in his van, finding out what's happening with word processing and language arts instruction.

COMPUTER-SUPPORTED LANGUAGE ARTS ON THE COLLEGE CAMPUS
Anne Auten. Former language arts software designer for MECC, and Coordinator of User Services for the ERIC Clearinghouse on Reading and Communication Skills for NCTE. Anne holds a joint appointment in Graduate Education and Computer Science at the College of St. Thomas, St. Paul, MN.

LOGOWRITING
Judy Bachman. As Elementary Computer Coordinator for the Ladue, MO, School District, Judy's curriculum and staff development efforts focus on word processing, Logo, and the use of data bases to promote higher level thinking skills.

Gerald H. Block, Editor of *CRLA Journal* from 1982–85; Conference Coordinator, Educational Computing Conferences; Executive Director, A Learning Place, Berkeley and Oakland, CA.

FrEdWRITING
Bruce Fleury. Father of FrEdWriter and Computer Organized Writing. Mentor Teacher, Magnolia Elementary School, El Cajon, CA.

WRITE-ON! DATA DISKETTES TO IMPROVE WRITING SKILLS
Karen Jostad. Former Manager, Software Design Group at MECC, and now President of Humanities Software, Cerritos, CA.

SOFTWARE REVIEWS
Karen Jostad and Shirley Keran.

WRITING ACROSS THE CURRICULUM
Shirley Keran. Formerly a software designer for MECC, Shirley is now a freelance software designer and consultant, and member NCTE Committee on Instructional Technology.

EDITING
Larry Lewin. Larry teaches eighth grade language arts at Monroe Middle School in Eugene, OR. He conducts workshops on composition and computers and has co-authored textbooks on composition instruction.

Stephen Marcus. Associate Director, South Coast Writing Project, University of California, Santa Barbara.

WORD PROCESSOR-SUPPORTED READING INSTRUCTION
Michael Milone, Jr. Founder and President, American Research and Development Group, Honesdale, PA.

Henry Olds. Applications Development Manager for Learningways, Inc., and Senior Advisor, *Classroom Computer Learning*. Henry's main interest is in exploring new applications of the computer in promoting the curriculum.

ELECTRONIC NEWSPAPERS
Craig Peck. Principal, Stowers Elementary School, Cerritos, CA.

EXTENDED LEARNING PROJECTS
Tim Riordon. Tim is a teacher in Eugene, OR. His current interests include writing across the curriculum, especially as a part of extended learning projects.

Irene and Owen Thomas.
Owen Thomas is a Professor of Education, Literature and Linguistics, University of California, Irvine, and co-director of the UC Irvine Writing Project. Irene Thomas is also an educator and language arts consultant, and a charter member of NCTE's Committee on Educational Technology. Together the Thomases authored and designed The Writing Workshop.

KEYBOARDING
Keith Wetzel. A former elementary and middle school teacher, Keith is now Workshop Coordinator for the Center for Advanced Technology in Education, University of Oregon. He has conducted research on teaching writing and word processing to students grades 3–5. ■

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"Uses of the Computer in Teaching the Composing Process"

(Excerpts from a paper delivered by Irene D. Thomas at NCTE 1985)

It is in the area of the composing process that the microcomputer could indeed have the greatest impact on the English curriculum. Both the teaching/learning public and the marketplace are currently responding to this possibility. The evidence is clear: Most of the computer sessions at the 1984 and 1985 NCTE conventions were geared to composing via the computer; countless articles on word processing have been published in the past year in both commercial and professional publications; several magazines, including *Electronic Learning*, have devoted entire issues to word processing; and research being carried out at universities as prestigious as Teachers College Columbia University is focused on the impact of composing by computer. Meanwhile the marketplace is rapidly gearing up: Several student-oriented word processors have appeared in the last year; comprehensive writing packages that aid the user from idea-getting to proofreading are either available or under development—*WANDAH* (now called *HBJ Writer*), *The Writing Workshop*, *QUILL*, *The Write Steps*, *Writer's Assistant* and several MECC products are examples. Moreover, several well known authors are under contract to write "generic" books on using word processors in the writing curriculum.

A movement is clearly underway.

And not by accident. Anyone who has composed on a word processor knows that it is very possible that the computer used with this kind of software could revolutionize our writing curriculum. We have already heard countless anecdotal reports about how reluctant writers have suddenly become eager writers, how children have become willing to talk about their writing and share it as they begin to internalize writing as a process—a living cycle of planning, drafting and revising—a process made substantially easier by a good word processor used under the direction of a creative, well trained teacher. Indeed, word processing (the very name offers a key) supports the process model of writing instruction in ways that no other educational tool can.

We believe that in time anecdotal reports will be substantiated by empirical research. But by no means should we wait for empirical research before going ahead. Our observations and intuitions should be trusted as never before.

The Stages of Writing

1. Planning

Basic text editing functions allow users to generate ideas andexplore their thinking without limits. Because, as Stephen Marcus says, "words on a screen dance in light: rather than lying frozen in semi-permanency, the user is encouraged to experiment, to change his or her mind, to follow an unexpected line of inquiry. All of the prewriting methods fostered by the National Writing Project— clustering, brainstorming, free writing, invisible writing, mapping—are easier to do on the computer screen than on paper. Programs are already being developed to expedite these processes through appropriate screen prompts, prompts which individualize instruction in a way that saves teachers enormous time. Hugh Burns and Helen Schwartz, both of whom have designed computer programs that engage students in shared dialogues as part of the inquiry/invention stage of planning, have shown the potential power of the computer as

an aid to fruitful collaboration (see Wresch, *The Computer in Composition Instruction*, NCTE publication). In passing, it should be remembered that research on writing competence has already shown that students who plan are better writers than those who don't.

2. Drafting

Again, the ease with which changes can be made encourages students to view their work as one stage of an ongoing process. They can remain open to sudden insights and major reorganization through "move" functions, and major additions and deletions with none of the obstacles of retyping an entire piece of work. We believe that research will eventually show that the higher thinking skills we seek to engage students in will be more evident among students who havelearned to compose with word processing tools and related support programs such as those mentioned above.

3. Revising/Editing/ Proofreading

While even the most sophisticated mechanics and style checkers cannot judge content and other high level writing features, the aids they do provide can serve to free the teacher for real teaching—of higher order thinking skills. In the future, teachers freed from teaching and evaluating mechanics, and who are also trained to focus on substantial issues, may truly become our best educational resources.

Editing aids available to older students through programs such as *WANDAH*, and to younger students through *The Writing Workshop*, for example, check the writer's spelling, diction, sentence and paragraph length, and other measurable features of style. Such well designed programs encourage students to review their sentence structure and direct them back to their original plan to see if major ideas were omitted or changed. They may also remind students of the audience and purpose they indicated during the planning stage. The best of these programs allow teachers to alter data bases; furthermore, they do not force judgments on the writer, but merely report features for re-examination. All of the software packages mentioned earlier expedite peer review and sharing in a non-threatening way.

Here are some arguments we often hear against the use of word processing and editing aids:

1. Word processing is difficult to learn and takes time away from writing instruction.

2. There are not enough computers currently in schools to make word processing a reality.

3. Computer utilization is difficult to incorporate into the traditional classroom setting.

4. Editing checkers may lead to the institutionalization of sterilized, impersonal writing styles.

5. Spelling checkers may produce a generation of nonspellers, the way calculators have reduced the ability to perform calculation.

6. The efficiency of editing aids will encourage students to focus on superficial writing features rather than on content.

7. Word processing requires keyboard skills, and there is not enough time to add this to our curriculum.

We hope that the advantages mentioned earlier address most of these concerns. The remaining few can be remedied over time by NCTE's active support of the following directions:

1. Teacher training and retraining designed with the computer age in mind.

2. Financial support for school computer labs from parents, local business and government grants.

3. Incentives to schools, software producers and universities to conduct individual and collective research projects on the uses of computers in schools.

4. Rewards and recognition to schools that develop and implement excellent models for computer applications.

5. Provisions for a forum through which teachers can write about and disseminate their successes with computer applications. (The newly formed Assembly on Computers in Education [ACE] already has identified this as one of their goals.)

6. Development of new audiences for student writing through electronic networking and publishing.

7. More opportunities and encouragement for printout publications of student work.

8. Allowing the very best computer applications to lead the way—or at least influence—curricular reform. The realization, for example, that keyboarding will be a fact of modern life should serve as an incentive to readjust the curriculum to allow for keyboarding instruction.

In the opinion of most members of our committee, word processing is the best justification yet for using computers in our classrooms and in our curriculum. ■

Timely Writing Ideas

Sharon Franklin and Jon Madian

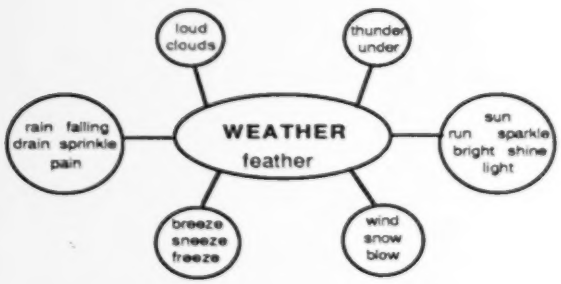
In the last issue we discussed how chants and acrostic poems provide excellent forms through which students can express their experiences, ideas, and imaginings. In this issue we will focus on two more forms—recipes and similes.

Recipes for All Occasions

Recipe poems can be written on every imaginable topic. You can write a recipe for love, friendship, good grades, bad grades, revolution, insight, arguments, a nice day, solving math problems, writing a poem, a winning team, a smile, or the weather.

Begin by brainstorming words that are associated with your topic. For example, to write a Recipe for Weather, we might begin by listing "weather words." You can use a brainstorming tree or simply list the words, leaving room to write other words nearby as they come to mind.

Brainstorming Tree



Note that rhyming words are paired with weather words wherever possible. You may also want to include other sound-related words. Once you have a good list of words, you may want to list recipe words. If your students have been reading and sharing favorite recipes, and perhaps recording some of their family's favorites by interviewing grandparents and other family members, then they'll be familiar with the key vocabulary for recipes. Your list of recipe words will probably look similar to this:

break	add	stir	mix	fold
separate	beat	fry	heat	boil
broil	melt	dissolve	sift	cool
wash	drain	pour	sprinkle	cook
cream	bake	simmer	dredge	spoon
ooze	poach			

The following is a recipe poem from the "Poetry for Young Poets" disk, part of Humanities Software's **WRITE ON!** Collection (P.O. Box 590727, San Francisco, CA 94159).

A Recipe For Weather

Begin with a large blue bowl
Take a sprinkle of yellow sun
Cover with dark clouds
Add swirling wind
Pour falling rain
Stir in loud crashing thunder
Mix together with a feather
And you've made a day of winter weather

Occasional Similes

The simile is probably the most commonly used literary device in poetry and storytelling. Authors are always telling us that the river curved like a snake, or the snake curved like a river.

A simple approach to the simile poem is simply to write about today:

Today is as cool as the inside of a refrigerator.
Today is as hard as mining coal 1000 feet beneath
the earth.
Today is as fun as 1000 seals playing in an ice slide.
Today is like a roller coaster that got stuck at the top.
Today I am like a person looking for his mind
Or a monkey looking for a branch to hang from.
Today I am like a bear who can't find his cave.

The calender-related activities to follow are based on information beautifully provided in the book, *The Kids' Diary of 365 Amazing Days* by Randy Harelson and published by Workman Publishing. This large paperback sells for a very reasonable $8.95.

February 1 • National Freedon Day

Here is a perfect topic for social studies, history, values clarification, and writing, writing, writing. Students might discuss how much freedom people their age should have. Do they have enough freedom (or too much) at home? in school? Why is it important for people to have freedom? Why is the United States considered a model of freedom? Some people say that while we have political and economic freedom in America, and even the opportunity to speak, worship, and behave as we wish, that in fact people in America are mostly free to buy things they are told to buy on television. Is there real freedom in a "consumer society?"

You may want to review the history of the Magna Carta, Declaration of Independence, Constitution, and Bill of Rights. Consider the life and work of John Stuart Mill, Thomas Jefferson, Abraham Lincoln, Harriet Tubman, Crazy Horse, Martin Luther King, Jr., Susan B. Anthony, Helen Keller, A.S. Neill, Isadora Duncan, John Muir, and Gandhi. Who else can you and your students think of as examples of people who lived, worked, and perhaps died for freedom?

Recipe for Freedom

Grow a stout and independent heart
Mix in a little anarchy,
a cup of gentleness,
and a pound of courage
Warm a smile for life's heartaches
Boil anger at injustice
Stir patiently all misunderstandings
Hold gently the dark winds of fear
Work devoutly to bring love near

Freedom is Like

Freedom is like a pine forest
where you walk and breathe sweet air
and no one ever bothers you.
Freedom is like a fragile,
beautiful flower that you can enjoy
and care for
but which you can never possess.
Freedom is having your little brother
take out the garbage.
Freedom is as precious as a song
that makes you smile.

Here is an acrostic and a chant poem on the theme of freedom.

F reedom is strangely
R are on our
E arth as if
E veryone didn't
D elight in the right
O f
M aking their own destiny

Freedom freedom freedom
A flag flapping in the breeze
Freedom freedom freedom
A white butterfly in a blue sky
Freedom freedom freedom
Grandma mixing cookie dough
in her rocking chair on the
front porch

February 2 • Groundhog Day

People have always used animals to help them predict natural events. Will the winter be severe? Look at the squirrel's tail and the bear's fat. Is it going to rain? Look at a hive of bees. Is there going to be an earthquake? Watch your dog. Is the winter almost over? See if the groundhog named "Jimmy" in Sun Prairie, Wisconsin, sees his own shadow as he emerges from his hole on February 2 after a winter of hiding. If he sees his shadow, he scurries back beneath the earth and winter will be with us for six more weeks. If he stays out, spring is here. People who've been keeping track say Jimmy's been right 16 out of 19 times.

The groundhog is frightened by his own shadow. Discuss why small rodents are frightened of shadows, particularly moving shadows, because they mistake these shadows for birds of prey. How has this knowledge helped people to devise a clever way to keep birds from flying into glass windows? Discuss the nature of a shadow. In what way is a shadow like the color black? Both are created by the absence of light. Look at landscapes and still lifes, including paintings and photographs, to observe how shadows affect our sense of perspective.

Recipe for Shadows

Take a bright full moon
Let it shine through my window
Lay in bed and watch
The bare winter branches
Scratching dark and silently
Like ghosts
On my cold winter white wall

Shadows are Like

Shadows are like black porcupines
Shadows are as silent as fear
Shadows are like echoes in your ear
Shadows are as harmless as most ghosts
Sometimes I make shadows that look like
Pancakes, apes, birds, or french toast

S ome shadows
H ave eyes and terrible mouths
A bout to bite you
D inosaur shadows
O ften fill children's bedrooms
W ildly marching or
S ilently standing perfectly still

February 3 • Bean Throwing Night

In Japan, children throw beans for good luck on Setsubun, or Bean Throwing Night. On February 3, each person eats one bean for every year of their life, plus one for good luck in the coming year. In olden days, people drove evil spirits from their homes by scattering beans.

Beans have been an important source of nourishment for mankind. When beans and rice are mixed, all the essential proteins are provided. This is how vegetarians replace the proteins that most people gain from eating meat.

You may want to have a bean hunt. Have your students research beans. How many types are there? Where are they grown? What is their nutritional value? How expensive are they? What are some tasty recipes? Perhaps you can compile a cookbook or have a potluck.

Many people like to sprout beans. Perhaps you'd like to make sprout gardens in ziplock plastic bags or in sprouting jars. You may want to discuss the belief in oriental medicine that living, growing foods like sprouts contain the life force and that eating living foods is better for you than eating dead ones. What do your students think of this idea?

February 4 • Lucky Lindy's Birthday (1927)

Fifty years ago Charles Lindbergh (nicknamed Lucky Lindy) flew from New York to Paris in a little less than 33 1/2 hours. He was the first man to fly across the Atlantic. Would anyone have guessed that 40 years later we would be flying to the moon? What might happen in another 40 years, in the year 2027?

Discuss the job of a futurist. Who are some of the current futurists? Jules Verne is a famous futurist from our past. Are science fiction writers futurists? Have your students play the role of futurists as they write an essay or a story about the world of the future. Let them choose how far into the future they wish to project.

February 6 • Mardi Gras

Mardi Gras is a French word that means "fat Tuesday," because it is the last day to fatten up before beginning the 40 days of "doing without" known as Lent. In France on Mardi Gras day, people eat crepes. Perhaps your students could bring in recipes for crepes and some may want to cook some at home or at school. How about a crepe party to celebrate Mardi Gras with the people in France and in New Orleans?

February 11 • Thomas Edison's Birthday (1847 -1931)

Thomas Edison made a laboratory in the basement of his home when he was ten years old. He was one of the greatest inventors of all time. He invented the light bulb, phonograph, movie projector, and mimeograph machine that makes it possible for teachers to give their students purple worksheets.

What might make a person become an inventor? What problems can students think of that could use a good invention to solve them? What are some inventions that students particularly like? What problem would you want to solve as an inventor? How would you go about solving it?

February 12 • Abe Lincoln's Birthday (1809)

Abe Lincoln was famous for many things—his style and skill as a speaker, his strange appearance, his leadership in the fight against slavery, his unhappiness, and his assassination. This is a good time to read the Gettysburg Address and to discuss the history of slavery.

Abe also liked to use similes. He's quoted as having said, "I'm as thin as soup that was made by boiling the shadow of a pigeon that had starved to death."

Recipe for a Skinny Person

Find a pigeon that has starved to death
Pluck his feathers
Boil his shadow with a few smooth stones
Salt to taste and sip slowly

February 14 • Valentines Day

Learn the story of how Valentines Day came to be. Write a Recipe for LOVE, LOVE is Like..., a LOVE acrostic, or LOVE chant. Tell your students the delightful story, "Mr. Murdle's Large Heart" from a collection of stories called *A Street of Little Shops* by Margery Bianco. (It is now out of print, but most public libraries have a copy.) Students will enjoy writing their own descriptions of a visit to Mr. Murdle's store.

February 15 • Susan B. Anthony Day

Susan B. Anthony was born on this day in 1820. She worked to change the law which denied woman the right to vote. She died in 1906, before the law was changed in 1920, but she never gave up. She said, "Failure is impossible!"

Discuss the idea of a self-fulfilling prophesy, for good or ill. What does it take to make dreams come true? Where do important dreams come from? Discuss the meaning of words like "devotion," "perseverance," "justice," and "work." How did it happen that woman were originally denied the right to vote? Why did it require so much work to give women this right? What attitudes had to be changed? Where did these attitudes come from?

This is a good time to begin a research unit on a famous person such as Susan B. Anthony. You may want to compile a list of possibilities for students that include some important but lesser known people, with a good mix of males and females, and ethnic groups. Each student can write the report in first person, and then *become* that person as they give their report complete with a simple costume and props! It's a good time to invite parents...and don't forget to videotape the presentation so students can see themselves!

February 20 • Brotherhood Week

During the week of Washington's Birthday, we always celebrate Brotherhood Week. The theme is that we are all brothers and sisters.

Buffy Saint-Marie, a folk singer and a Native American woman, wrote a wonderful song for Brotherhood Week called "The Seeds of Brotherhood." The third verse goes like this:

Open, open up your eyes,
it's time to find a place to hoe,
to find a place to plant your row,
where the seeds of love can grow and grow,

your hearts the perfect spot you know;
it's time to clean your garden plot
of sticks and stones and other old rot.

Your students may enjoy writing about brotherhood. People have two instincts: to love and to fight. We can only achieve brotherhood by understanding our instinct to fight and the insecurity and the fear from which it springs. You may also want to discuss how often the images of a garden, of growing plants, and the process of gardening are used in poems and stories. Gardening and weaving are two of the most often-used metaphors for the human soul.

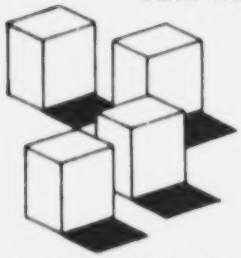
February 22 • George Washington's Birthday (1732 - 1799)

George Washington's life has come to exemplify values such as democracy, courage, and determination. A wonderful book which looks at George Washington's life from a slightly different angle is *George Washington's Breakfast* by Jean Fritz. In this book a youngster named after George Washington sets out to discover what his namesake and hero ate for breakfast. A well told story of discouragement, perserverance, and discovery. It was written for 4th or 5th grade students, but it works beautifully for all ages. You learn a good bit about "doing history" and about George Washington! ■

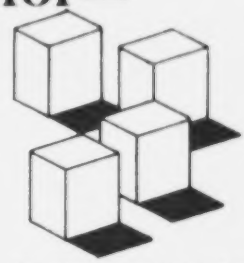
IN THE NEXT ISSUE:

A Focus on Writing Across the Curriculum

An Activity for THE WRITING WORKSHOP—



Building Blocks of Ideas



This lesson can be done on the chalkboard, with paper and pencil, as word processing files (see Teacher's Activities for details), or with the Prewriting disks that accompany Milliken's ***The Writing Workshop****.*

Student Outline

You can use brainstorming with any assignment to help you get started and help you find out what you know. It is a technique you will use regularly in the upcoming lessons.

Once you have your brainstormed list, it's a good idea to group those items that seem to go together. Each group, then, is a category, and each category could eventually become a paragraph.

Activity A

Here the groups are given to you—the four seasons of the year. Brainstorm all the ideas you can think of that go with each season.

WINTER	SPRING	SUMMER	FALL
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

1. Do the seasons make you think of any special emotions, sights, sounds, tastes, smells, people, places or holidays? If so, add these to your list.

2. If you were going to write about the seasons from your point of view, which would you describe first and which last? Would you put your favorite season first or last?

Activity B

Here's a chance to practice making groups from a list of items. Place all the items you think belong in a group in one column. Then start a new column for each group you find. Finally, label each group according to the items in it.

eagle octopus starfish pelican zebra lion giraffe shark sparrow ostrich hummingbird rhinocerous eel panther whale

Activity C

Here you are given a general topic, and you must come up with categories that fit the topic. Brainstorm several items that might fall under each category you name.

1. Kinds of music
2. Kinds of television shows
3. Name a topic that could easily be divided into categories. Name at least three categories.

Teacher Activities

This lesson is meant to provide direct models for the techniques of brainstorming and grouping ideas which are central to any planning strategy. If your students have some prior experience with these techniques, you might want to skip this lesson or simply assign the extension activities below.

1. Have students practice grouping as in Activity B by asking them to sort the following list of musical instruments into separate groups.

   violin saxaphone guitar kettle drum cymbals cello trumpet tambourine ukelele tuba

   mandolin flute bongo drums bassoon oboe

   (One division could be into string, wind and percussion groups. Some students will know to divide the winds into woodwind and brass.)

2. A writing assignment might be the following: Write a first draft of an essay on the seasons suggested in Activity A. Before you start, decide on the order in which you'll describe the seasons, and explain your reasons in the introductory paragraph.

3. Have students make up their own scrambled list of items as in Activity C. Let students exchange papers and try to group each other's items.

4. **The Writing Workshop** diskette called BRANCHING is perfectly designed for these activities and the outline. Experiment with it yourself before you ask students to use it. ■

FrEdWriting

with

Bruce Fleury

Computer Organized Writing

Use your computer to teach well organized writing. Templates that you can make will guide your students, step by step, to write the way you want them to write.

One of the most powerful features of **FrEdWriter** is its ability to guide and organize student writing. By using **FrEdWriter**'s prompted writing techniques, teachers can create templates to guide student writing.

A template is a series of teacher-made questions or prompts that appear on the computer screen. A student responds to each prompt by writing at the keyboard. The student's writing appears on the screen along with the prompts. The prompts lead the student through writing steps designed by the teacher to produce a well organized draft.

After the prompts have guided the student through the writing task, they disappear.

Once the student is ready to print his or her work, and the prompts are no longer needed, **FrEdWriter** removes them. The students' responses are printed without the prompts. The printed student writing is structured and organized according to the structure and organization of the teacher-made template, but the template is no longer visible. It has been saved for future use by other students.

Students can then read with pride their own well organized ideas and see their own well structured writing. This can be a big step toward understanding and using structure and organization in writing.

This is a template created by a high school teacher to guide her students through a book report assignment for an English class.

```
NAME

DATE
```

```
CLASS

TITLE

AUTHOR

WRITE THE NUMBER OF PAGES

WRITE THE KIND OF BOOK YOU READ
(ADVENTURE, MYSTERY, BIOGRAPHY, ROMANCE,
COMEDY, HISTORICAL, FICTION, NONFICTION).

WRITE COMPLETE SENTENCES FOR THE
REST OF THIS BOOK REPORT.

SETTING: TELL IN WHAT PART OF THE
WORLD OR COUNTRY THIS STORY TAKES
PLACE. DESCRIBE IT.

TELL THE APPROXIMATE TIME THIS STORY
TAKES PLACE (PAST, PRESENT, FUTURE).
GIVE THE DATE IF POSSIBLE.
```

MAIN CHARACTERS: NAME THE MAIN CHARACTER(S). DESCRIBE WHAT HE/SHE/ THEY LOOK LIKE. WHAT MAKES THE MAIN CHARACTER STAND OUT?

WHAT KIND OF PERSONALITY TRAITS DOES THE MAIN CHARACTER HAVE (HAPPY, SAD, UPSET, HONEST, WORRIED, HARD WORKING, GENEROUS, ETC.)? DOES THIS PERSONALITY TRAIT HELP OR HURT THE CHARACTER?

PLOT SUMMARY: WHAT IS THE MAIN PROBLEM IN THE STORY? WHAT IS THE MAIN CONFLICT SUCH AS MAN AGAINST MAN, MAN AGAINST NATURE, NATURE AGAINST NATURE, ETC.? EXPLAIN.

WHAT IS THE CLIMAX OF THE STORY (HOW IS THE PROBLEM SOLVED)? HOW DOES THE STORY END?

WHAT DID YOU LIKE BEST ABOUT THE STORY? WHY? WHAT WOULD YOU CHANGE TO MAKE IT A BETTER STORY?

The high school book report template above is made up of a series of "prompt boxes." The space between each prompt box can expand indefinitely to accommodate any length response.

Here is the book report template after the student has responded to each prompt. Student responses are accessible for editing, but the prompts are protected. The cursor will not stop inside a prompt box, so the prompts cannot be changed.

NAME

PENNY EMANON

DATE

MARCH 6, 1987

CLASS

ENGLISH LITERATURE

TITLE

TREASURE ISLAND

AUTHOR

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON

WRITE THE NUMBER OF PAGES

200 PAGES

WRITE WHAT KIND OF BOOK YOU READ (ADVENTURE, MYSTERY, BIOGRAPHY, ROMANCE, COMEDY, HISTORICAL, FICTION, NON-FICTION).

FICTION

WRITE COMPLETE SENTENCES FOR THE REST OF THIS BOOK REPORT.

SETTING: TELL IN WHAT PART OF THE WORLD OR COUNTRY THIS STORY TAKES PLACE. DESCRIBE IT.

THIS STORY TAKES PLACE IN BOTH ENGLAND AND ON THE ISLAND WHERE THE TREASURE IS HIDDEN, SKELETON ISLAND. IN ENGLAND THE STORY BEGINS ON THE WEST COAST OF CORNWALL NEAR BRISTOL. THE ISLAND THEY GO TO IS IN THE CARIBBEAN.

TELL THE APPROXIMATE TIME THIS STORY TAKES PLACE (PAST, PRESENT, FUTURE). GIVE THE DATE IF POSSIBLE.

THIS STORY TAKES PLACE IN THE 1700S WHEN PIRATES ON THE OPEN SEAS WERE COMMON. HOWEVER, THE STORY WAS WRITTEN IN THE 1800S FOR ENTERTAINMENT.

MAIN CHARACTERS: NAME THE MAIN CHARACTER(S). DESCRIBE WHAT HE/SHE/ THEY LOOK LIKE. WHAT MAKES THE MAIN CHARACTER STAND OUT?

JIM IS THE MAIN CHARACTER. HE IS THE YOUNG BOY WHO FIRST FINDS THE TREASURE MAP, AND HE LIVES IN AN INN ON A DESERTED PART OF THE COAST.

WHAT KIND OF PERSONALITY TRAITS DOES THE MAIN CHARACTER HAVE (HAPPY, SAD, UPSET, HONEST, WORRIED, HARD WORKING, GENEROUS, ETC.)? DOES THIS PERSONALITY TRAIT HELP OR HURT THE CHARACTER?

JIM IS SMART AND HE KNOWS WHEN TO TRUST PEOPLE. HE LIKES LONG JOHN SILVER, BUT HE SOON LEARNS THAT HE CANNOT TRUST HIM.

PLOT SUMMARY: WHAT IS THE MAIN PROBLEM IN THE STORY? WHAT IS THE MAIN CONFLICT SUCH AS MAN AGAINST MAN, MAN AGAINST NATURE, NATURE AGAINST NATURE, ETC.? EXPLAIN.

THE MAIN PROBLEM IS WHEN BOTH THE PIRATES AND JIM'S GROUP ARE TRYING TO FIND THE TREASURE. THEY HAVE A BATTLE AT THE FORT AND JIM IS LATER HELD AS A PRISONER.

WHAT IS THE CLIMAX OF THE STORY
(HOW IS THE PROBLEM SOLVED)? HOW
DOES THE STORY END?

THE CLIMAX TAKES PLACE WHEN THE PIRATES COME ACROSS THE BODY OF THE DEAD CAPTAIN FLINT, BUT THE TREASURE HAS BEEN TAKEN. THE SQUIRE AND DOCTOR AND THEIR GROUP SURPRISE THE PIRATES AND KILL THEM. JIM IS RESCUED, AND THEY FIND THE TREASURE.

WHAT DID YOU LIKE BEST ABOUT THE
STORY? WHY? WHAT WOULD YOU
CHANGE TO MAKE IT A BETTER STORY?

THIS IS ONE OF THE GREATEST ADVENTURES IN LITERATURE. I PARTICULARLY LIKED THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN JIM AND LONG JOHN SILVER. MORE HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT MIGHT HAVE MADE THE STORY EVEN MORE REAL AND EXCITING.

When the above is printed, the prompts disappear and the student's writing looks like a well organized book report, which the students can read with pride because it is their own well structured writing.

PENNY EMANON
MARCH 6, 1987
ENGLISH LITERATURE

TREASURE ISLAND
ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON
200 PAGES
FICTION

THIS STORY TAKES PLACE IN BOTH ENGLAND AND ON THE ISLAND WHERE THE TREASURE IS HIDDEN, SKELETON ISLAND. IN ENGLAND THE STORY BEGINS ON THE WEST COAST OF CORNWALL NEAR BRISTOL. THE ISLAND THEY GO TO IS IN THE CARIBBEAN.

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MORE HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT MIGHT HAVE MADE THE STORY EVEN MORE REAL AND EXCITING.

* * * * * *

This template below was made by a computer lab aide for use by third grade students. The prewriting experience for the high school book report assignment was reading a book. The prewriting experience for these third grade students was a science-oriented student assembly. This template enabled students to organize and report on what they learned in the assembly. Here is the template along with the student's responses:

A
REPTILE REPORT
BY

WRITE YOUR NAME UNDER THIS BOX.

BILL MANN

WHO CAME TO OUR SCHOOL TO TALK
ABOUT REPTILES?

DR. BACON BROUGHT 7 ANIMALS TO MY
SCHOOL. THEY WERE ALL REPTILES.

WHAT ARE THE WAYS REPTILES STAY
AWAY FROM DANGER IN THE WILD?

THESE ANIMALS PROTECT THEMSELVES BY THE COLORS
THAT THEY HAVE BY HIDING IN THE TREES, ROCKS, AND BUSHES.

HOW ARE REPTILES AND AMPHIBIANS
DIFFERENT?

THEY HAVE DIFFERENT KINDS OF SKIN. AMPHIBIANS
HAVE SMOOTH SKIN AND REPTILE SKIN IS ROUGH WITH SCALES.

DESCRIBE SOME REPTILES AND AMPHIBIANS.
******
HERE IS A LIST OF THE ANIMALS:

BOX TURTLE — TWO-HEADED LIZARD
BEARDED DRAGON — WHITE TREE FROG
GOPHER SNAKE — MOUNTAIN KING SNAKE
ALBINO SNAKE
******
PICK YOUR FAVORITE ONES.

BOX TURTLES CAN PROTECT THEMSELVES WITH THEIR SHELLS. THEY COME FROM SOUTH CAROLINA. THE TWO-HEADED LIZARD TAIL LOOKS LIKE HIS HEAD SO HE CAN GET AWAY FAST. YOU CANNOT SEE THE WHITE TREE FROG ON THE LEAVES OF A TREE, BECAUSE HE CAN CHANGE TO GREEN. YOU CANNOT SEE THE DRAGON LIZARD ON THE BARK OF A TREE, BECAUSE HE IS GREY. THE GOPHER SNAKE IS GOLD AND BROWN AND NICE FOR A PET. IT MOVES VERY FAST. THE MOUNTAIN KING SNAKE LOOKS LIKE A CORAL SNAKE, WHICH IS POISONOUS. THE ALBINO SNAKE HAS NO PROTECTION, BECAUSE IT IS A WHITE SNAKE.

Remember, when this is printed, the prompts disappear:

A
REPTILE REPORT
BY
BILL MANN

DR. BACON BROUGHT 7 ANIMALS TO MY SCHOOL. THEY WERE ALL REPTILES.

THESE ANIMALS PROTECT THEMSELVES BY THE COLORS THAT THEY HAVE BY HIDING IN THE TREES, ROCKS, AND BUSHES.

THEY HAVE DIFFERENT KINDS OF SKIN. AMPHIBIANS HAVE SMOOTH SKIN AND REPTILE SKIN IS ROUGH WITH SCALES.

BOX TURTLES CAN PROTECT THEMSELVES WITH THEIR SHELLS. THEY COME FROM SOUTH CAROLINA. THE TWO-HEADED LIZARD TAIL LOOKS LIKE HIS HEAD SO HE CAN GET AWAY FAST. YOU CANNOT SEE THE WHITE TREE FROG ON THE LEAVES OF A TREE BECAUSE HE CAN CHANGE TO GREEN. YOU CANNOT SEE THE DRAGON LIZARD ON THE BARK OF A TREE BECAUSE HE IS GREY. THE GOPHER SNAKE IS GOLD AND BROWN AND NICE FOR A PET. IT MOVES VERY FAST. THE MOUNTAIN KING SNAKE LOOKS LIKE A CORAL SNAKE WHICH IS POISONOUS. THE ALBINO SNAKE HAS NO PROTECTION BECAUSE IT IS A WHITE SNAKE.

One of the most powerful features of **FrEdWriter** is its ability to guide and organize student writing. Using **FrEdWriter**'s prompted writing techniques, you can make templates that will guide your students, step by step. Prompted writing with **FrEdWriter** becomes the first opportunity for some students to feel good about their writing.

Complete instructions for prompted writing may be found in the **FrEdWriter** documentation files on every **FrEdWriter** program disk. And, in the next issue of **THE WRITING NOTEBOOK**, you will find an easy, step by step guide to making high quality **FrEdWriter** prompted writing templates. ■

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"Easing" into LogoWriter

Judy Bachman

LogoWriter is EASY!

I know it did not look easy in the last issue. The full capabiliites of **LogoWriter**—text, graphics, animation, sound, interaction, data base, etc.—were presented in the animated fly report.

But it is easy, as I hope to prove to you in this issue. Even beginners who know very little about Logo can create an impressive product. This simple beginning will allow teachers and children to ease themselves into using **LogoWriter**. And before you know it, students will be "programming"—and creating projects like the one in the November/December issue.

LogoWriter is Magic!

The dictionary gives one definition of magic as "a mysterious quality of enchantment."

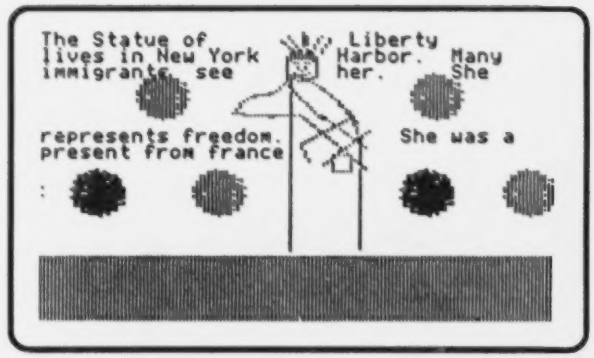
In working with teachers and children this fall, I find that **LogoWriter** truly enchants teachers, as well as children, with its magic. Teachers who were apprehensive about using Logo are excitedly coming up with one project idea after another.

Holidays are Magic!

Teachers know of the magic of holidays to evoke children's imaginations and creativity. We have capitalized on this magic by using holidays as a vehicle to study history, customs, vocabulary, poetry, cooperation—anything that we can slip in. You will see that LogoWriter + Holidays = Wonderful Things!

Lady Liberty

What an evocative object, this majestic lady in New York Harbor! All the excitement about her anniversary last July captured the imagination of one little person during computer camp this summer.


The Statue of Liberty
lives in New York Harbor. Many
immigrants see her. She
represents freedom. She was a
present from france

Alison Gordon
Ladue District Hi-U Summer Camp

This project was done in a summer computer camp by a kindergarten child (entering first grade in the fall). It was a project that evolved slowly during the two weeks of camp, as the group learned new things. During the transfer from this child's imagination to the computer screen, the graphics came first, with the text the final and crowning glory to this wonderful project. The class had worked in independent sessions to learn:

Drawing with the turtle—forward, back, right, left (which evoked the colorful fireworks and body of the lady in Alison's mind)

Setting a new shape for the turtle—setshape # (Miss Liberty's face)

Writing text—Apple key and U (to move "up" to the text screen from the command center)

This project was all Alison's, but it was made less frustrating and more possible by the small student/teacher ratio of the summer camp (6 to 1).

How do you accomplish something like this with only one teacher and 25 students?

Halloween Beginnings

Young children are remarkably resourceful. Thus, they are not inhibited by not knowing how to spell or punctuate—things they will be taught later on. Amy's work is an example of uninhibited inspiration.

Her class had been working with **LogoWriter** since the beginning of school. The sequence of learning went something like this:

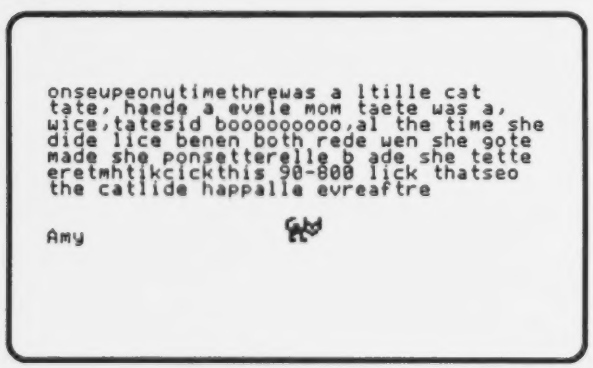
First, the class learned the turtle graphics commands forward, back, right, and left. They had ample time to play with the turtle at the two computers located at the back of their classroom.

Next, they learned how to "wake-up" the word cursor at the top of the turtle's work page. They practiced writing words, letters, numbers, etc.

They then learned how to name a page for saving. Up until this time, much to their disappointment, nothing had been saved. Naming a page was the most difficult task so far, because they needed to manipulate the shift key to print the quote mark: np "name (np stands for namepage). But the carrot was dangling. The class loved the turtle, and through much collaborative effort, everyone managed to name a page. Those who succeeded helped those who were still struggling. When the page was named, it was a simple matter of pressing the ESC key to save. Motivation was high. They all wanted to print their work.

Halloween was approaching, so it seemed a good time to introduce turtle "costumes." The command was simple—setsh (setshape) and a number. The idea of the turtle dressing up in a Halloween costume intrigued these first graders.

The result is Amy's story, which just flowed (obviously without any teacher interference). She is delighted with the turtle, its costumes, and the words she can make.

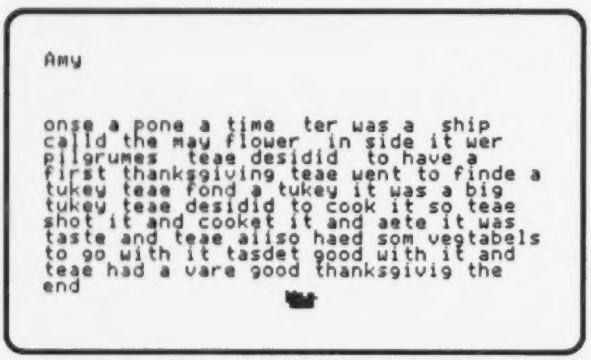

onseupeonutimethrewas a ltille cat
tate, haedo a evele mom taete was a,
wice,tatesid booooooooo,al the time she
dide lice benen both rede wen she gote
made she ponsetterelle b ade she tette
eretmhtikcickthis 90-800 lick thatseo
the catlide happalle evreaftre
Amy

Amy Clark, Grade 1
Conway School, Ladue School District

Amy willingly read her story to me, and I offer you this translation:

Once upon a time there was a little cat that had an evil mom that was a witch that said boo all the time. She didn't like being bothered. When she got mad, she (got) punished really bad. She thought arithmetic like this 90-100 like that. So the cat lived happily ever after.

This **LogoWriter** experience is a magnet to all of the children. When their turn comes, they are ready with their ideas, as they know their time is limited. Some stick more to the graphics capabilities of **LogoWriter**, while others love the stories that they can create. Whatever the attraction, it must make them more aware of words and ideas as evidenced by Amy's latest creation, inspired by a turkey "costume" and the children's study of the First Thanksgiving. (No translation needed this time.)


Amy
onse a pone a time ter was a ship
calld the may flower in side it wer
pilgrumes teae desidid to have a
first thanksgiving teae went to finde a
tukey teae fond a tukey it was a big
tukey teae desidid to cook it so teae
shot it and cooket it and aete it was
taste and teae aiiso haed som vegtabels
to go with it tasdet good with it and
teae had a vare good thanksgivig the
end

Amy Clark, Grade 1
Conway School, Ladue School District

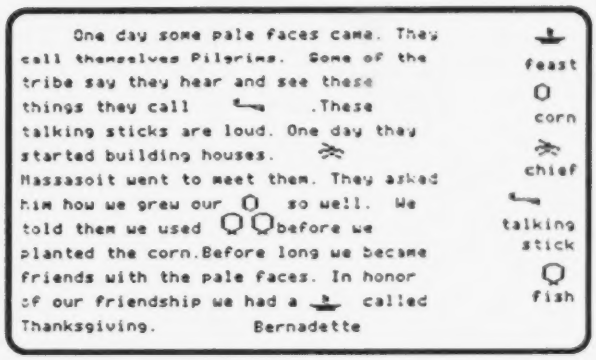
Thanksgiving Rebuses

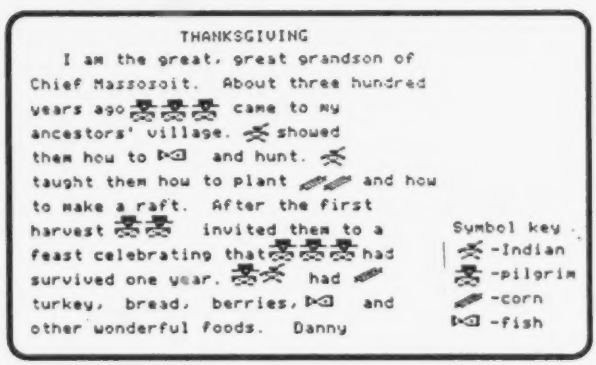
A more sophisticated writing project using **LogoWriter** was completed by a fourth grade class under the direction of their teacher, Denise Ford. The products are outstanding, both in looks and in the quality of the writing. The looks came easily using **LogoWriter**. The writing was motivated by an experienced, expressive teacher through prewriting experiences.

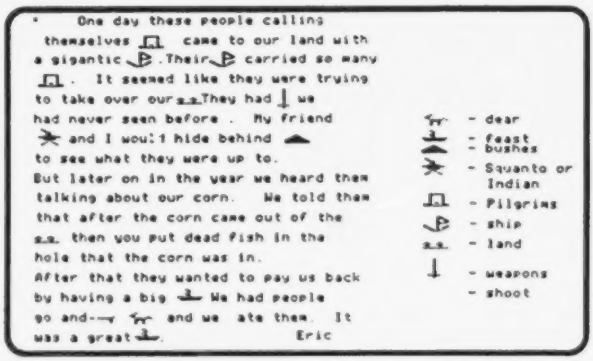
In the first grade **LogoWriter** examples, the graphics inspired the words. The fourth graders wrote the story first on the **LogoWriter** work page, and then created their pictures to replace some of the words.

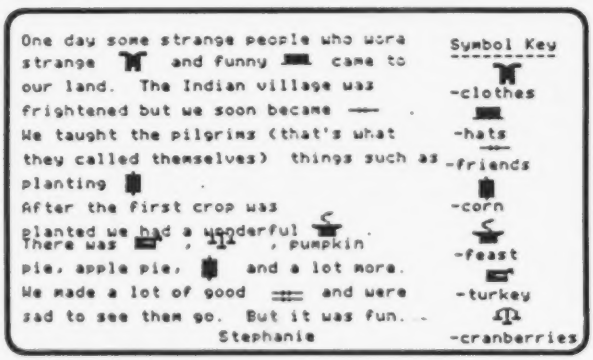
These pictures are easily designed shapes or "costumes," which were put into the shape editor. The words were then deleted and replaced with a "stamp" of this shape.

No programming was necessary! Everything was done in the "immediate" mode and saved by simply naming the page. These rebuses, created by students at Spoede School, could easily be done by any third or fourth grade class with very little **LogoWriter** experience.


One day some pale faces came. They call themselves Pilgrims. Some of the tribe say they hear and see these things they call .These talking sticks are loud. One day they started building houses. Massasoit went to meet them. They asked him how we grew our so well. We told them we used before we planted the corn.Before long we became friends with the pale faces. In honor of our friendship we had a called Thanksgiving. Bernadette
feast
corn
chief
talking stick
fish


THANKSGIVING
I am the great, great grandson of Chief Massasoit. About three hundred years ago came to my ancestors' village. showed them how to and hunt. taught them how to plant and how to make a raft. After the first harvest invited them to a feast celebrating that had survived one year. had turkey, bread, berries, and other wonderful foods. Danny
Symbol key
-Indian
-pilgrim
-corn
-fish


One day these people calling themselves came to our land with a gigantic .Their carried so many . It seemed like they were trying to take over our They had we had never seen before . My friend and I would hide behind to see what they were up to. But later on in the year we heard them talking about our corn. We told them that after the corn came out of the then you put dead fish in the hole that the corn was in. After that they wanted to pay us back by having a big We had people go and and we ate them. It was a great . Eric
- dear
- feast
- bushes
- Squanto or Indian
- Pilgrims
- ship
- land
- weapons
- shoot


One day some strange people who wore strange and funny came to our land. The Indian village was frightened but we soon became . We taught the pilgrims (that's what they called themselves) things such as planting . After the first crop was planted we had a wonderful . There was , , pumpkin pie, apple pie, and a lot more. We made a lot of good and were sad to see them go. But it was fun. Stephanie
Symbol Key
-clothes
-hats
-friends
-corn
-feast
-turkey
-cranberries

Getting Started

I hope these simple projects have convinced you that even the novice **LogoWriter** user can get children started on using this wonderful tool. You don't have to be an expert before you start using it with your class.

Start with something simple. Learn how to use the shapes to adorn a piece of writing. Before you know it, you'll be an old hand, inspiring and leading children in all sorts of creative projects. Don't forget to send those projects to this column so that they can be shared with everyone! ■

Next time: ***LogoWriter*** *and Poetry.*

Multischool Electronic Newspaper

Craig Peck

The Multischool Electronic Newspaper involves students and teachers from 11 elementary schools in the production of a monthly newspaper that is filled with articles written by students from each participating school and read by more than 3,000 students. The idea behind the project?—to involve students in a meaningful writing activity that closely simulates real newspaper production.

The newspaper is produced using microcomputers, modems, and the software program, **Newsroom**. This software made it possible for us to create computer-generated classroom newspapers—and it opened the door for the multischool newspaper concept with one of its components, "Wire Service," which allows newspaper articles composed using the program to be sent over the phone lines to other schools.

To get the project started required the dissemination of project information to all upper grade teachers in our school district. Principals were asked to encourage the participation of interested teachers at their own school sites. This process generated a list of teachers who agreed to become part of the newspaper project. At the first project meeting, these teachers received an outline of the project, completed a needs survey, and established a support network.

The project has three phases, of which we are now in phase two. During phase one, each participating school produced a page for the Multischool Electronic Newspaper. These pages were sent to a designated school, where they were assembled and the completed newspaper then redistributed to all project schools.

Project teachers were all trained to use **Newsroom**. Most of the training was accomplished through pairing; project teachers who were familiar with the program worked with less experienced teachers. To gather articles, project teachers encouraged other teachers at their schools to have their students write articles about school activities that could be shared with students at other schools. Teachers were then asked to have their students use the read-around process to select the articles that would be printed in the newspaper. Teams of students were assigned the task of using **Newsroom** to develop their school's newspaper page.

After each issue is printed, project teachers meet to review areas for improvement, discuss problems, and develop guidelines for student articles in future issues. These sessions have been extremely important to the success of our project, because teachers have a chance to share ideas and work together to solve problems.

Phase two uses the modem to send completed newspaper pages from each site to a collection site for assembly into the newspaper. This phase has been the most difficult to accomplish. We had to work together to develop an understanding of telecommunication, as well as helping each school to purchase a modem and provide access to their phone lines. Presently all but four schools are using modems.

Phase three is just around the corner. During this phase all project schools will have full knowledge of the technological aspects of the project, and the focus will be to work with students to develop a more sophisticated newspaper. We will divide the newspaper into sections, e.g., editorial, opinion, local news, world news, book reviews, classifieds, etc., and will assign responsibility for each section to a different school each month. We feel this will expose students to a variety of writing styles. The sections will then be sent to a selected school each month, and those students will act as editors in evaluating, correcting, and assembling the final copy.

The Multischool Electronic Newspaper is an ambitious project, but the benefits to students are many. In the next issue of **THE WRITING NOTEBOOK**, I will share our plans for integrating the newspaper project into all areas of the curriculum. ■

For additional information on the project, please write to Craig Peck, Stowers Elementary School, ABC Unified School District, 13350 Beach Street, Cerritos, CA 90701.

FIVE LANGUAGE ACQUISITION STRATEGIES FOR LIMITED ENGLISH AND LANGUAGE DISABLED STUDENTS

Jon Madian

This article presents and connects five strategies for enhancing language acquisition. Since students with language disabilities and limited English students both struggle to acquire oral language, these strategies are relevant to both groups.

STRATEGY 1 - Total Physical Response (TPR)

If students give a total physical response (TPR) to whatever they are saying or singing, it is very helpful, since almost all learners benefit from kinesthetic and visual cues that depict the meaning of a word, phrase, or sentence. Actors use TPR when they study and memorize their lines, taking on all relevant physical and emotional responses.

However, even if a teacher feels that TPR is worthwhile, it is hard to think of basic language patterns that lend themselves to physical responses. For example, it is difficult to give a total physical response to the idea that "I know how to write my name" without turning it into a game of charades.

STRATEGY 2 - Connecting TPR with Basic Language Patterns

The idea of basic language patterns refers to simple sentences or questions whose meanings are altered by changing one word. For example:

"I run to the store."

"I run to the house."

This basic pattern also can be made into a question.

"Where do you run to?"

"I run to the house."

"Do you run to the house?"

"Yes, I run to the house."

Foods and eating patterns lend themselves to TPR. For example:

"What do you eat?"

"I eat a hot dog."

"Do you eat a hot dog?"

"Yes, I eat a hot dog."

If you first decide with your students how they might gesture "I run to" or "I eat," then it will not be too difficult for them to figure out a gesture for "store," "house," or "hot dog." Indeed, this one bit of improvisation will provide some humor and unexpected inventiveness within a securely patterned structure.

STRATEGY 3 - Self Language

In *Dibs: In Search of Self,* Virginia Axeline demonstrates how she reflected Dibs' actions, feelings, and thoughts as he interacted in the play therapy setting. What is striking about this technique is that it is very similar to what a healthy two or three year old child does when playing alone. A child named Owen playing alone in the sandbox might be overheard saying:

"Owen truck push sand.
Rmmmm! Rmmmm!
Push push. Owen push sand.
Owen dig hole. Dig. Dig."

Perhaps talking to oneself about oneself is the way the emergent language user practices language and develops the ego. I know who I am—"Owen" and what I'm doing—"Dig. Dig."

It seems desirable to structure learning situations in which students use self language. For example, if students are drawing, rather than drawing silently, have them whisper their name (or I) plus what they are doing:

"I take the blue crayon. I draw the sky. I draw a white cloud. I put the blue crayon back. I take a yellow crayon. I make the sun...."

Notice that each sentence is based on a simple, basic repeating pattern: "I take the ...." "I draw the ...." "I make the ...." And notice that TPR is built into every language expression as students narrate their own activities and monitor all of their actions with language. Consider how much language can go on during such an art lesson.

In order to begin this process with limited English students or students with language disabilities, you will need to model it. While students sit at their desks with crayons and paper, you have a large piece of paper and crayons that they can see. You begin: "I take a blue crayon." Then all the students imitate your action and words. Soon they'll be working independently generating original language patterns. For example, "I take a red crayon and draw the clown's hair and a red wagon."

STRATEGY 4 - Chant Poems

Many teachers have observed that the simple chant pattern works particularly well for oral and written language activities for students with language disabilities and limited English students. The chant, which begins by repeating one word three or more times, gets the process of language, the rhythm, and meaning started. Then the descriptive line follows naturally to amplify or complete the thought.

Perhaps your class is doing a circus unit and you have an elephant parade. As the elephants parade, they may chant:

March March March
The elephants march
Step Step Step
I march march march
Swing Swing Swing
I swing my mighty trunk
Slow Slow Slow
I swing my trunk slowly
Fast Fast Fast
I swing my trunk fast

Food and eating make good chant topics to connect TPR with basic language patterns:

Bite bite bite
I bite my hot dog
Chew chew chew
I chew it up
Sip sip sip
I sip my coke
Yum yum yum
It is good!

Notice that by saying the chant line, students are helped with the rhythm and inflection of the spoken sentence.

STRATEGY 5 - Seeing What We're Saying

Since language learning is auditory, kinesthetic, and visual, writing is another means to help students see what they are saying. Many students can learn to write and read while they are learning to speak, and others will find that written symbols help them grasp spoken language.

It is recommended that you write key words for activities on the board. For example, if you are coloring and doing self language, you may want to write the names of the colors and other key words or phrases. Talk about the initial sounds and rhymes that occur. It isn't that the students will be held accountable for knowing how to read. Rather, this is an easy way to help them begin to see speaking. It may help to foster students' interest in reading, and as they begin to recognize written language, they will want to create their own.

A word processor with a large monitor is very helpful in writing down basic spoken patterns. The clear, crisp letters written in light on the screen are easily recognized and manipulated. New ideas and patterns can be created, and students can monitor the process of expression. Everyone can read along as the words go up on the screen and are modified. A printout can be made for each student to illustrate and take home. ■

The **WRITE ON!** Special Education Collection from Humanities Software has several word processor data diskettes of prompted writing activities for most Apple II word processors. These diskettes, including CHANT CHANT CHANT, WORD FAMILY CHANTS, and PRIMARY LITERATURE COLLECTION, all utilize many of the concepts developed above. Teachers will find that the basic patterns developed on these diskettes are ideal to help the beginning language user learn to speak, read, and write easily and playfully. For more information write Humanities Software, P.O. Box 590727, San Francisco, CA 94159.

SAVE A FILE

Judy Piper

Save A File is one of seven lessons created by the author to take fifth and sixth grade students through Seven Steps for Successful Word Processing: Load File, Delete Text, Insert Text, Save A File, Print File, Move Text, and Compose and Create. Although the lessons were designed to be used with **Magic Slate**, *the ideas can be easily adapted for use with any word processing program.*

Purpose: Students are going to be using the computer as a tool to write. They must be able to operate a word processing program.

Materials: A computer and a word processing program, an overhead projector, and initialized disks for the students (teacher assigns two students per disk).

Objectives: The student will be able to save a file onto a disk.

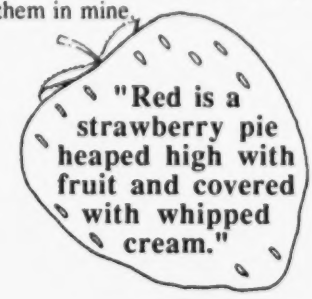
Review: Loading files, deleting and inserting text.

Lead-in: In the past few weeks we have learned to load files. You've done that lots of times. Then you deleted text when you got rid of the wrong homonym in the story, *Max*. You inserted words into your name poem. Now we are going to learn how to save a file to your disk.

Strategy: Today we are going to start out by thinking of all the colors in the rainbow. Close your eyes and imagine a rainbow with all its colors—red, yellow, orange, blue, green, indigo, and violet. Now you're going to make a choice about which one of these colors is your favorite. Keep that one in your head for the moment. Mine would have been red. Start picturing different things that are red and we'll write them down here (use an overhead projector). Give prompts such as "do you eat anything that's red? Would you wear something this color? What would it be?" Focus on using the five senses.

What do all these things on your list have in common? (They're the same color.) So this is going to be the name of your file. Look at your menu. I want you to create a new file, so what box do you need to highlight? (N for new). Remember to always press RETURN when you want the computer to know that you've made a choice. Type in the name of your color and press RETURN. You have a blank file; your file name does not appear in your file when it is printed. Type in your color again as the title of your writing today. Now we will save your file. Go back to the Main Menu. How do you do that? (ESC Q). You want to save it, so what box do you need to highlight? (S for SAVE). And what do you press? (RETURN). Make sure your name is spelled correctly and press RETURN. You have just saved your file!

Now let's look at my list for red again. I have strawberries on it. Using words I'm going to tell about strawberries so that you will see them in your mind just the way I see them in mine.



What did I tell you about strawberries that helped you get a clearer picture of it? (Underline these ideas on the overhead and label with where they were, how many there were and what was near them.) What else could I have told you about strawberries to help you get a clear image of them? Think about where else you might see them (who, when, how).

So what is an image? (a vivid description). How do we help someone else to see the same image that we see? (by telling them about it—where it is, etc.) Refer to overhead if necessary.

Now think about your favorite color and type in an image starting with the color like I did ("Red is"). (Wait until everyone has a color typed in.) Now we will save your file. Go back to the Main Menu. How do you do that? (ESC Q). You want to save it, so where do you go? (S for SAVE). And what do you press? (RETURN). Is the file name correct? Then tell the computer by pressing what? (RETURN). Now ahead go and edit your file by putting in another image, again starting with the color word.

Summary: You should write five or six images for your poem. Remember to save your file after you type in a new one so you won't lose any of it accidentally.

Evaluation: The student will save the color file onto a disk.

GREEN

Green is grass in a pasture where horses are feeding.

Green is a four-leaf clover found on St. Patrick's Day.

Green is a tree covered with bright green leaves.

Green is a shining emerald on a ring covered with jewels.

Matt
Grade 6

TURQUOISE

Turquoise is a ring on a little girl's finger.

Turquoise is a small stream flowing through the beautiful pine trees of a forest.

Turquoise is a refreshing color in the rainbow between lite blue and lite green.

Turquoise is a kite soaring among gentle breezes.

Turquoise is my favorite color.

Alison
Grade 6

INDIGO

Indigo is a clear light in a blue flame.

Indigo is a tear drop as it sheds from your eye.

Indigo is a dew drop on a leaf.

Indigo is a spring of water dripping down a mountainside.

Indigo is the sunshine on a cold winter day.

Brent
Grade 6

Spin Tales

One morning, I woke up and I found I had turned into a butterfly. I was surprised that I had turned into a butterfly. I found that I was beautiful and I had wings. I was very colorful, and I could fly. When I flew out of the window, I was flying so high. I looked down and I saw my friends going to a party. I was sad because I couldn't go to the party because now I was a butterfly. When I got home again, I turned into myself. I was happy to see myself again. My mother and father were back home. I went to the party and I brought a present for my friend. I was so happy.

Neeharika

When I looked at the trees in the schoolyard, I imagined I saw a green soldier. He protected the school. He had a brown uniform, green hat, brown shoes, a sharp sword and a machine gun. One day all the bad gangs attacked the school. They didn't know about the tree. All of a sudden, one of the strong and healthy branches swooned down and grabbed ten of the gang members and flung them into the trash can! After that, none came to bother our school again.

Paul

A SURVEY OF ELEMENTARY STUDENTS' ATTITUDES TOWARD WORD PROCESSING

Keith Wetzel

Do students prefer writing with a word processor to writing with paper and pencil? Do students prefer to use the word processor for part of their writing, but not all? Over the past two years I have explored these word processing issues as they relate to process writing.

In this study, process writing lessons begin with a prewriting activity such as a discussion or the viewing of a film. After gathering ideas, students write a first draft (quick write). Authors read their drafts aloud to peers and/or the teacher, and the listeners give the authors feedback about their ideas. Using the feedback, the authors then revise their work. At least one more draft follows in which the authors focus on specific problems such as misspellings or sentence structure.

In order to assess student attitudes toward writing, I surveyed a fourth grade class that has begun process writing using word processors a year earlier. As fourth graders the students received 15 hours of structured keyboarding instruction during the first semester. In addition, instruction in process writing using a word processor that began in the third grade was continued throughout their entire fourth grade year. At the end of the school year, I administered an attitude survey to students to determine their attitudes toward word processing. The survey questions and the answers are listed in the table below.

1) Most often would you rather write with a

67% A. word processor
33% B. pencil

2) For your first draft (quick write) would you rather use a

46% A. word processor
54% B. pencil

3) Would you rather do your revising and editing with a

83% A. word processor
17% B. pencil

FINDINGS

I found that most students preferred to use a word processor for writing. Students thought revising and editing tasks were well suited to the word processor. However, most preferred to write an initial draft with a pencil.

These preferences may be linked to keyboarding proficiency. In an earlier study I investigated whether the keyboarding proficiency of third, fourth, and fifth graders influenced the quality of their essays. One hundred students received approximately one hour of keyboard familiarity instruction, followed by 10 weeks of instruction in word processing and process writing. The students wrote holistically scored essays before and after the 10 weeks of instruction. I found that students who were more proficient typists wrote significantly better essays.

Students were asked to elaborate on their reasons for selecting their answers to the above questions.

First Draft

Reasons given by students who preferred pencil to write the first draft included:

"Your first draft is easier (with pencil)...and when you are finished you can revise and edit it on the computer."

"You can write neater."

"It's faster."

Reasons given by students who preferred the word processor for writing the first draft included:

"It would look neat."

"I like it."

"It is easier."

"You can read the writing easier."

"Neater."

The majority of students who preferred the pencil for the first draft said the pencil was faster for them. Students who preferred the word processor for the first draft said that it was neater or easier to read.

Revising and Editing

Students who preferred a pencil for revising and editing were asked why. All of these students said that the pencil was faster for revising. Those selecting the word processor for revising and editing gave more varied answers:

"Revising and editing is faster with the word processor, and is slower with paper and pencil."

"You can erase by pushing delete, and it's neater, and you can rearrange paragraphs or sentences by pushing some buttons."

"Because it's simpler with a word processor."

"So I can proofread it faster."

"It looks better."

"It is easier to correct."

INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS

One goal of using a word processor in writing is to make the writing task easier. A word processor should be used if it helps to accomplish this goal. However, the survey suggests that word processing helps students differentially.

A simple majority of the fourth grade students reported that the word processor was less helpful at the first draft stage. For these students, the word processor may not help them record their thoughts fluently. In spite of the 15 hours of keyboarding instruction, I found that students generally did not write as quickly using a keyboard as they did with pencil. This is particularly important because the teacher emphasized fluency in writing—for example, the quick write strategy.

The writing tool can also influence the ease of revision and editing. After receiving feedback on a piece of writing, the author revises it for meaning and clarity. These students inserted and deleted text to revise and edit their pieces of writing. Students believe that the word processor does not require the recopying time that rewriting with pencil requires. Indeed, it is easier, faster, and neater for a large majority of students to use a word processor to revise and edit.

NEW QUESTIONS

There are many questions still to be answered. How long does it take for students to become as comfortable with word processing as with pencil? If students started keyboarding instruction earlier, would they become more proficient typists in less time? If they started keyboarding later, would they become proficient typists more quickly? Do students who type as quickly as they write with pencil prefer word processing to pencil for their first draft? Is the word processor a more valuable tool for teachers and students who place a higher emphasis on revising and editing? Is there a relationship between the tool the student uses, revision, and quality of writing?

IMPLICATIONS

In closing, a word of caution is in order. This study involves a very specific set of conditions that include a certain amount of keyboarding instruction and a process writing approach. In addition, the data was collected from one fourth grade class of 23 students. The results should be applied to other situations with care. With that preface, some recommended practices follow.

Not every student prefers the same mode of writing (pencil or word processor). Less obvious is that for some students the word processor is more desirable at different stages of writing. I believe that educators should be sensitive to students' needs and preferences. Depending on the circumstances, the teacher may take different courses of action with students who are reluctant to use a word processor for writing. For example, the teacher might ask an aide or a parent to type in the first draft for each student (exactly the way each student wrote the draft with pencil). Students then may use the word processor for revising and editing. Alternately, if the teacher determines that more typing skill is worth the investment of time, sufficient additional time for students who are slower typists to practice their typing skills might be allowed. Finally, the teacher may give students a choice of writing tools. ■

A SCOPE AND SEQUENCE FOR STORY WRITING, Part 2

Sharon Franklin and Jon Madian

This unit began in the November/December issue with number and alphabet books, stacking stories, and animal stories.

4. Personal Stories

Although personal stories lack invention, they are an important place to begin to develop storytelling skills. A personal story may be the simplest of all, since the main character is oneself and the event is not invented but merely retold. Here are two examples of personal stories which were written on the theme "I'll Never Do THAT Again!"

One time I was turning on the turning bars.
Then I hit my chin. My top tooth hit my chin
and made a hole on my lip. It hurt too.
I'll never do that again because it hurt
and I do not want a hole in my chin again.
Trisha Miranda

One day I hit a ball over a fence.
I had to climb the fence. When I climbed the fence
I fell down. That happened on April 5th.
It happened at my house. I'll never do that again
because I don't want to fall down again.
Loara Martinez

5. Exaggerated Fiction

For most students, recounting an event that happened to them is easier than making up a story, but there are some students who seem to find more vitality in imagination than in reality. A wonderful Dr. Seuss story that introduces students to exaggeration in telling a tale "told by a child" is Dr. Seuss's first book, *And To Think That I Saw It On Mulberry Street.* Fiction with exaggeration in a personal narrative is easily grasped by young writers. Let students see what they can write to the topic "The Day it Rained Cats and Dogs."

6. Tall Tales

Tall tale characters can also introduce students to the fun of imagination and exaggeration. There are a number of ways to approach tall tales. I like to begin by focusing on tall tale characters such as Paul Bunyan, Pecos Bill, or Annie Christmas (yes, there is at least one woman tall tale heroine!).

Begin by reading some tall tales to your students. If they haven't read or heard many on their own, they need to hear lots of them to begin to see some common elements of exaggeration. *Paul Bunyan: A Tall Tale,* retold and illustrated by Steven Kellogg, is a fun way to start. Have students recount as many of the tall tale elements from this story as they can.

Size and weather are two often-exaggerated elements in tall tales, and it's a good place to do some writing with similes and metaphors. You can also use a program like **FrEd Writer** to make a template of some tall tale sentence starters such as: It was raining so hard that _____ , She was so strong that _____ , He was so mean that _____ , The baby grew so quickly that _____, or . . . . These could be compiled into a book, complete with illustrations!

When you're sure that your students are catching on, have them write a description of themselves as a tall tale hero or heroine, a one-paragraph tall tale description of the weather, and most fun of all, a tall tale description of dinner at their house.

At this point your class is ready for the big event—writing a real **TALL** tale—4 ft. high! (By the way, you'll appreciate the help of some volunteers in getting ready for this activity.) It is great fun for students to work in cooperative groups, or individually if you can handle the amount of materials you'll need, to write and illustrate these books. Challenge students to write modern day tall tales with female *and* male main characters. These are wonderful to display in your school library or for students to take to primary rooms to share.

7. Fairy Tales and Myths

Like tall tales, students need a great deal of exposure to fairy tales and myths before they try to write them. Share lots of stories with your students (don't forget there are excellent filmstrip/cassette kits available as well as books), and discuss and analyze the ingredients.

A fine introduction to myths and fairy tales is the simple transformational story told in the first person. The story begins, "When I woke up, I was sure surprised to see that I'd turned into a _____." Of course, students can vary this beginning: "When I woke up, I felt strange. I lifted my head and it was so little and light. I wanted to move my arms to push the blankets back, but I had none. Then I felt

I didn't have two legs any more, just one. What has happened to me? I wondered. Then I realized I was a snake."

Once the story establishes the animal the student has turned into, the story can develop how the animal moves and thinks and how the world looks from the animal's perspective. Now that we have a sense of the animal as character, create a middle to the story. Where does the animal go (usually out the window), and what does he or she discover? The ending is the turning of the animal back into the writer or, which seldom happens, the decision to remain the animal.

The following is the beginning and ending from a story by Sandy, a fourth grader at Stowers Elementary in ABC:

One morning when I woke up I was a hamster. I was really mixed up. I was warm and furry. I went to see myself in the mirror. I thought that my mother would be surprised so she was cooking breakfast and I went to see her. She looked down. She screamed and kicked me out of the house, so I went to another city....

(the angel in the new city explains that)....the evil queen in the palace did a spell on you. I asked what could I do to turn to myself again? She said you have to get there by 12:00 and get into her kingdom and get her wand and face it toward the moon by midnight, 12:00 p.m. So she creeped in a mouse hole and saw that she saw a hamster just like her so she asked who are you? I am from a house. I use to have a sister whose name is Sandy Nam. I said I am Sandy Nam and we told the whole story while we dug and got into the kingdom and got the wand and faced it toward the moon and the palace and everything disappeared and we turned to ourselves again.

Beginning both myth and fairy tale writing with simple person into animal transformations makes sense, since transformation is perhaps the universal theme in these kinds of stories.

8. Mysteries, Myths, and Other Original Stories

By the sixth grade, students are fascinated with mystery stories, fictional accounts of their peers, and biographies. They are also very capable of writing their own original myths and fairy tales. Students third grade and younger can also if they are exposed to lots of these kinds of stories.

The following myth was written by Karen Lee, a sixth grader in Mrs. Rommel's class at Stowers, ABC Unified School District. Prior to writing this myth, she had written a number of transformational poems and had read a number of myths.

HOW THE GIRAFFE GOT HIS LONG NECK

An original myth by Karen Lee

Long, long, long ago before the long-neck giraffe existed, two short-neck giraffes were roaming across the grasslands of Africa. One was a boy, the other a girl, and they were in love. They liked to play games.

"Let's play Hide and Seek," declared Kalena.

"Sounds great!" agreed Marcus.

Kalena ran and hid behind some tall trees while Marcus counted to 20.

"OK, here I come!" shouted Marcus.

He searched and searched and searched. Nowhere could he find Kalena. He asked his grassland friends, but none could help. Finally, Marcus met a magnificient blue bird.

"Yes, I saw Kalena. The terrible, ugly witch of the jungle captured her. They headed for the great mountain."

"I must find her. I will not stop looking," Marcus shouted.

Meanwhile, Kalena was being held a prisoner. The wicked jungle witch planned to have Kalena for her winter meals. Kalena kept looking and

listening, hoping Marcus would find her. She even prayed to her animal god, Divad.

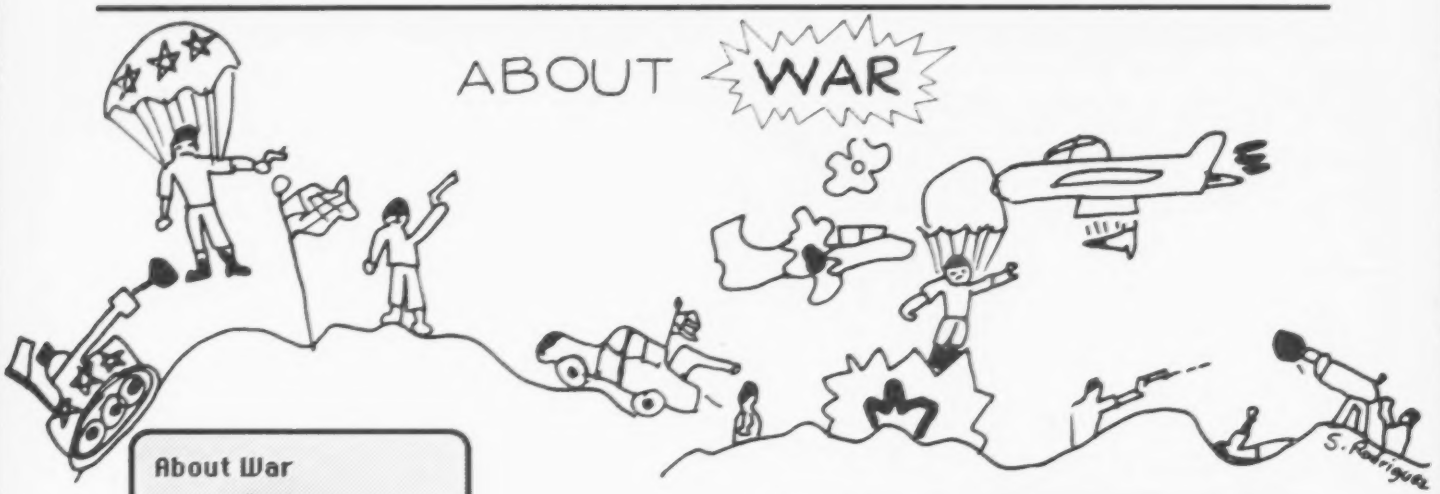
"You must send a signal to let Marcus know where you are," Divad explained to Kalena. "Keep looking and listening and Marcus will save you."

So Kalena looked and looked. As she did this, her neck kept getting longer and longer. As Marcus searched, his neck stretched too. Marcus could now look over tree tops and hills. He eventually could reach his head to the top of the great mountain and peek over. There, beyond miles of tall jungle trees, he saw his Kalena. Her head had stretched high like a gigantic tree among the tall trees.

Marcus ran as fast as he could--across the grasslands, over the great mountain and through the jungle. His strong legs stomped on the wicked witch and killed her! Because of the searching, these two animals stretched their necks extremely long--and that's why the giraffe has a long neck!!!

Summary

Students at any level, even college, can benefit by following a progression that begins with a number and/or alphabet book and moves into mysteries, biographies, and biographical fiction. If students feel they are too old to write some of these forms, you may motivate them by having them write the stories to share with younger students. ■



About War

If there is a war
Outside my window,
I will have to
Close my window,
And the door,
So the bullets
Won't get in
And make a mess
In the house.

I wonder why
There is war outside,
In my backyard?

Susana

Wars Are

Wars are dirty.
Tanks, cannons, missiles,
Form a lot of mud and dirt.
It is the Army against the Marines.
It is more than that,
It is a killer.
Rockets go over the ocean
Just to destroy.
Everyone gets killed.

Herman

WRITING ON THE COLLEGE CAMPUS

Anne Auten

Here is an update on two recently held conferences of special interest to word processing advocates in higher education classrooms. The first conference, held at the San Antonio Convention Center in late November 1986, was staged by The National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) and celebrated NCTE's diamond jubilee. One of the more interesting speakers at the conference was the University of New Hampshire's Donald Murray, who spoke to an overflow audience on developing fluency in young writers.

One of the more interesting meetings (for those with a word processing bent anyway) was that of NCTE's Instructional Technology Committee. Since their first meeting, committee members had been working toward the creation of a book on model and existing English teacher training programs that incorporate computer methods. In a response to a call for chapter proposals, 59 English teacher education program directors submitted outlines of chapters describing computer implementation in their programs. This initial pool was reviewed by committee members who then selected a dozen proposals.

These 12 program descriptions will make up the first section of the book; the second section will consist of descriptions of model methods for implementing computers in the English classroom. The text will be the capstone of the work of the committee's first three years.

In addition to this longer text about teacher education programs for integrating computers into English classrooms, the committee will produce the following short documents to serve the council's large constituency of computer users: a SLATE (Support for the Learning And Teaching of English) Starter Sheet on the place of computers in the teaching of English language arts, directed to administrators, school boards, colleagues in other disciplines, and journalists, to help promote better understanding of the goals of English teaching; an explication of English software design criteria directed to those designers and developers involved in marketing products for the language arts; a statement on the council's support of the policy of equal access to computer technology for all disciplines; and a statement calling for promotion and tenure committees to recognize the contribution to the teaching profession made by faculty involved in developing computer technology. The committee has its work cut out for them; it's fortunate that they use word processors and can communicate with each other by modem!

The second recent conference of interest to computer-using college teachers, particularly those involved in teaching mass media courses, was sponsored by the S.I. Newhouse School of Public Communications at Syracuse University on their campus in early December 1986. Called "Mightier than the Typewriter: Using Computers to Teach Writing for the Mass Media," the conference featured such presenters as William Zinsser, author of *On Writing Well* and *Writing with a Word Processor*, and Book-of-the-Month Club editor; William Oates, founder of the Oates Clearinghouse of Computer-based Education in Journalism and Mass Communications, University of Miami; Gale Wiley, director of a networked computer lab for broadcast journalism, University of Texas-Austin; Carolyn Mullins, expert on the use of style analysis programs, Virginia Polytechnic Institute, Blacksburg; and Marianne Skinner, director of the *Newsday* library and expert on the use of data bases in reporting. The conference was the first designed for educators and administrators of schools who used computers to teach writing for the mass media or who were planning to use computers in the near future and wanted to make a smooth transition.

The Newhouse School's involvement with word processed text began in the fall of 1984 when some of their writing instructors began experimenting with teaching in the computer lab originally set up for editing classes. One year later, they moved from manual typewriters to IBM-PCs for all beginning newswriting classes. The following spring, students in the broadcast-electronic media sequences also began using the labs. While the transition to electronic text preparation at Newhouse has been relatively smooth, such is not the case in every effort to implement word processing in the delivery of college courses.

I invite you to share experiences of introducing word processing in your college classes. Send material to Anne Auten, P.O. 5017, College of St. Thomas, 2115 Summit Avenue, St. Paul, MN 55105. ■

REWRITING—USING THE BEST OF BOTH WORLDS

Larry Lewin

Young writers must understand the *purpose* of rewriting, they must be taught *how* to rewrite, and they must be *rewarded* for rewriting.

The process approach to writing has become the nearly universal way to teach composition. As teachers, most of us now use the steps of prewriting, drafting, rewriting, and publishing to teach students how to write. And well we should—this approach is as useful for professional writers as it is for those in primary grades.

I have taught high school, middle school, and elementary students writing using this approach. And in the process I have found that of the four steps of this approach, the third—rewriting—is the most difficult to teach students of all ages. Once a first draft has been written, most writers balk at analyzing, evaluating, and critiquing it. Young writers must understand the *purpose* of rewriting, they must be taught *how* to rewrite, and they must be *rewarded* for rewriting.

Rewriting has many different names: editing, proofreading, revising, correcting. I've come to call this third stage "rewriting," both because it sounds good (prewriting... writing...rewriting), and because the word can cover both the revising of content (ideas, organization, style) and proofreading the mechanics (spelling, punctuation, grammar). Both are essential for successful writing, and both are difficult to teach.

I use a combination of traditional methods and new technology (now available to most classrooms) to teach rewriting skills. I strongly recommend using both. Some content considerations can be addressed by software use, but I feel more confident with human input. Mechanics concerns can be taught by teachers and fellow students, but software programs are far more patient and careful. So I use both new and old methods to teach students these two components of rewriting.

"Some content considerations can be addressed by software use, but I feel more confident with human input. Mechanics concerns can be taught by teachers and fellow students, but software programs are far more patient and careful."

Motivating Students to Rewrite

In order to motivate students to rewrite a draft, they must be convinced of the need to rewrite. One way I demonstrate this is to show them a published article, written by me. After seeing their impressed looks, I then show them the stack of written drafts I had to submit before acceptance! This helps prove the point, because publication is a suitable reward for the hard work of writing and rewriting. Inviting a published author to the classroom with drafts in hand also works well. I then use the reward of publishing student work (step 4 of the process approach) as often as I can to motivate their rewriting.

Even with the publishing incentive, it still remains difficult for many students to rewrite. They must be taught what to look for in their drafts that need improvement. I have found new software programs that help me teach students this skill. Not only does using software provide them with individualized instruction while freeing me to offer others my help, but the software also does some of the analysis better and faster than I can. It also motivates rewriting—it's still novel, it's quick and clean, and it's almost painless. Even so, I am confident that computer use in the classroom will not replace me—I'm much smarter and more sensitive than even the best software available. Here are some specific ideas and programs to consider.

The Writer's Helper (William Wresch, CONDUIT) is a set of 22 mini-programs that work with a word processor (standard Applesoft test files and **Bank Street Writer**) to Find and Organize a Subject (11 prewriting programs) and Evaluate a Writing Project (11 rewriting programs).

To evaluate the content of a writing project, I like the "Outline Document" that shows the lead sentence of each paragraph to easily see transition words and logical sequence development. The "Words in Sentences" mini-program counts the number of words in each sentence, graphs them, and reveals sentence length variety. A "Readability Index" computes the readability level of the paper against the intended audience level, a job I don't like.

For proofreading the mechanics of a paper, a student can select one of the Word Analysis programs such as "Homonym Checker," "Gender- Related Language," and "Usage Errors."

Of course, rewriting not only means identifying the places that need improvement, it also requires making the improvements. Decisions are made by the student using the information from the **Writer's Helper**. These rewriting decisions are difficult, and the software can't make them. I find students asking me for my opinion quite often at this stage.

Another program I like using is **Ghost Writer** (Robert Bortnick and Thomas Lundeen, MECC). **Ghost Writer** will analyze texts written with the following word processors: **MECC Writer, Apple Writer II, Bank Street Writer,** Milliken's **The Writing Workshop, Magic Window II,** and **PIE Writer**.

Of the seven mini-programs available, I most often use "Paragraph Outliner," which prints the first sentence, shows the number of words in sentences using dashes for each word (except transition words and punctuation, which are printed), and finally prints the complete last sentence of the paragraph. This provides a graphic view of the overall organization and coherence of the paper—an important consideration in content revision.

I also like the "Sentence Length Analyzer," which graphs the number of words in each sentence with dashes (stars mark each fifth word) and prints the total number of words. This is helpful in determining sentence length variety, possible fragments and run-ons, and sentence combining opportunities. Of course, the program can only provide data—the writer must make the editing decisions.

I recently previewed the **Writing Adventure** (DLM), which has a prewriting activity disk, "Story Starter" and a drafting and rewriting disk called "Story Writer." This disk has eight mini-programs in its "Proofing Aid," including commonly misused words, troublesome verbs, adjectives, adverbs, and pronouns. It marks suspect words, so the writer can return to the text for editing.

I am excited by these programs, because they rapidly and loyally provide students with information about their texts—information that can lead to improvements. Best of all, students actually enjoy the process—rewriting is less painful.

These new programs improve the type of analysis found in a method I have used for years—a method I still respect. The "Sentence Opening Sheet" (Stack and Deck, Inc.) is a one-page sheet consisting of four columns that call attention to potential problem areas. Content issues like idea sequence, variety of sentence beginnings, and sticking to the topic are summarized when the student fills in the columns. Proofreading issues of capitalization, run-ons, and fragments are also raised.

Sometimes I prefer using this traditional (precomputer) method, because worksheets remove the issue of hardware shortage, and the student does the analysis. By comparison, the new software method is more intriguing, faster—and it does the analysis.

Another non-computer rewriting technique that I still use is the teacher-student conference. I consider this the most effective rewriting instruction, because it offers one-on-one discussion of the content of a paper. The human teacher is better at this than any software program I've seen.

I use a procedure modified from Donald Graves' book, *Writing: Teachers and Children at Work*. In five minutes I listen to the student read his or her first draft, quote a part I particularly like, ask one or two specific content questions that I was confused about, and listen to the student explain how the confusing parts might be cleared up. The student can then start rewriting as I conference with the next student.

I also like assigning proofreading partners or editing groups. For years teachers have used this method with good results. Regardless of the number of students or whether they are assigned by the teacher or chosen by the students, valuable human feedback is gained, especially when expectations are clearly set, time limits drawn, and some written response from the partners required.

Writing instruction has received a giant boost with the arrival of computer software. It motivates students, it speeds the process, and it's painless. But it can't replace the knowledge, taste, and insights of a human audience. So I use the best of both worlds—and not just as a teacher. I can count on **THE WRITING NOTEBOOK** editor to read this article prior to publication and give me valuable feedback—and you can be certain that I'm running this text through **Sensible Speller!** ■

Style Checkers: Good News and Bad News

Stephen Marcus

Computerized style checkers are a hotly debated topic these days.

By way of background, these programs—including spelling checkers—analyze some of the surface features of your writing. You take a document you've prepared with a word processor and use the style checker to do things like calculate readability scores, average sentence length, or percentage of active vs. passive verbs; check for certain punctuation and spelling errors; and catch proscribed words, e.g., sexist language, jargon, cliches, or nominalizations. Usually the style checker also provides some comments on what its analysis may imply about the quality of your writing.

Here are some of the problems with style checkers:

- Students learn how to change the "readouts" on their writing, i.e., change the numbers according to the teacher's or the program's values, but too often they are doing no actual thinking about the substance of their writing.

- Some research indicates that the changes in style the program suggests (and these are usually based on traditional composition texts) are not, in fact, the bases of teachers' grades on papers. Students are getting mixed messages about what people value in their writing.

- Computers are still too often described as "objective" and "nonjudgmental" when, in fact, the style checker's comments (written, of course, by a person) may be highly subjective, biased, or idiosyncratic. The calculations it performs are often based on an arbitrary choice of readability formulas.

On the other hand, style checkers are often defended on these grounds:

- With proper instruction, students understand the tentative nature of the computerized analyses.

> ***"Letting the students run the style checker puts some power back into their hands. They can get perspective on their early drafts without subjecting themselves to other people's criticism (at least not anyone they know)."***

- Common (if somewhat superficial) writing problems can be identified quickly, leaving the teacher to concentrate on more substantive qualities of the writing.

- Letting the students run the style checker puts some power back into their hands. They can get perspective on their early drafts without subjecting themselves to other people's criticism (at least not anyone they know).

It's one thing to use a style checker on a piece of your own writing. It's quite another for students to be using one in a classroom, in a situation where they are under terrific pressure to shape their writing to please someone else, usually a teacher. If you decide to have your students work with one, consider these common approaches:

- Analyze some writing by Hemingway and Faulkner. Discuss the computer's "readout" and advice. Apply the program to the Gettysburg Address or the Preamble to the Bill of Rights. Make sure everyone understands the strengths and weakness of the software, as well as something about how it works.

- Analyze some of your own writing and discuss with the class what you thought and felt as you read the analysis.

- Have your students write letters to the computer assessing the quality of its analysis of their writing.

When you're evaluating a style checker for possible use in your classroom, pay special attention to the "personality" or the "tone of voice" of the text (what I've come to call in general "the host in the machine"). Typically the use of a program like a style checker requires the teacher constantly to monitor its effects and the students' reactions to the software. The value of the activities you plan will to a great degree depend on how well students understand the abilities and the limitations of the software. ■

Below is a reproducible peer editing sheet developed by Jon Madian and the teachers at Juarez Elementary School in ABC School District. You are encouraged to use it and to change it to meet your needs.

Peer Editing Sheet

Write the name of the story you are evaluating:_____

Name of author(s) _____

Your name(s) _____

INSTRUCTIONS TO STUDENTS: Rate the story on the following points. Ten (10) means the story has a lot of quality. One (1) means it has very little.

1. How well does the opening sentence or paragraph set the mood?

   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

2. How well does the language suit the story?

   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

3. Are there original ideas, images and twists?

   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

4. Does the conversation help tell the story?

   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

5. Are the characters clearly described?

   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

6. Does any part of the story bog down or become too wordy?

   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

7. Are the characters, problems and motives clear?

   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

8. Does the setting contribute to the story?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

9. Is the setting vividly described?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

10. Is the plot well developed?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

11. Is the ending satisfying?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Please write specific ideas you have about:

1. What works well in this story:

2. What needs improvement:

3. Specific ways in which the story might be improved:

Writing in Math Class? You Bet!

Here is a good way to encourage writing in math. These students participate in their own learning process by talking about difficulties they're having, directing questions or suggestions to the teacher or their classmates and by explaining concepts to other students.

The one thing I have been doing in math for the last seven years is making careless mistakes. Thats why I might get a bad grade on an easy test. I have been trying to work slower, hoping that would help stop my carelessness. Do you have any other suggestions?

Math is usually one of my better subjects. I really like the unit we are doing now. It is lots of fun. I am really getting tired of multiplication.

--an 11-year-old girl

I thought that this math class (advanced fractions) has gone really well. The math in some parts was easy (reciprocols and changing to common denominator) but in others it was challenging enough. I really like fractions. It's just something about them. I had a lot of fun in this class. I learned a lot and while I was learning I was having fun, too.

Math, in general, I usually like. The only thing that really frightens me, and usually drops my grade to a low, low, **low**, is surface area. I just **can't do it**! In all tests and stuff, I get D's and C's, sometimes F's. I just do stinky. So when that rolls around, do you think you can pick me up on it, Mrs. Askeland? In all other areas, though, I really like math.

--an 11-year-old girl

Student to Student—Speaking of Primes ....

So you want to know about primes, do you? Well, let's just only work on the primes between 1-12. A prime is a number in which no other numbers can be multiplied to make that number besides 1 and itself.

Here is the number 8. 8 is **not** prime. You know the factors of 8:

1, 2, 4

2 x 4 and 4 x 2
1 x 8 and 8 x 1

You see that 2 x 4 and 4 x 2 goes into 8.

But 11 is a prime number. No other factors besides 1 and 11 can make 11.

1 x 11 = 11
11 x 1 = 11

So you see that eleven is prime because only itself times 1 equals it.

--an 11-year-old boy

The Quarterly of the National Writing Project and the Center for the Study of Writing

Reviewed by Jon Madian

The purpose of **THE WRITING NOTEBOOK** is to disseminate the creative ideas that originate in the heads of educators working in the traditions of the language experience approach, poets-in-the-schools movement, and the National Writing Project.

The National Writing Project's publication, *The Quarterly* of the National Writing Project and the Center for the Study of Writing, once again demonstrates the health of this curriculum design movement that has become a national model dedicated to the teacher as a professional and the student as a unique individual. The last issue arrived Christmas Eve and was nearly completely read by Christmas morning!

Mary K. Healy writes persuasively in "Beating the 'Writing Systems' on Our Own Ground" that the meaning of the National Writing Project is writing instruction designed by teachers who write and who design from within the context of the individual classroom and with an awareness of current research on the writing process. Ultimately teachers are educators, professionals who must practice, experiment, design, and evaluate what they teach. The harsh error in all "writing systems" is that they turn teachers into managers and students into non-individual, non-thinking entities for whom writing should be conditioned into a formula without regard for personal sensitivities, styles, or concerns. She goes on to suggest that the way for writing project advocates to counter the "writing systems" movement is to attend their orienta-tion meetings and research the structure of the curriculums in order to be able to point out the weak-nesses in design.

How beautifully this article reminds us of the individuality and professionalism that needs to be nurtured in public education.

In the next article, "Writing Projects and Writing Assessment," Mary Ann Smith talks about the new CAP proficiency test in writing. She points out that the wide range and number of prompts (from an eye witness account of something observed to an evaluation of a piece of literature or film) and the large number of scoring criteria means that no formula approach to teaching writing will work. More ammunition for making teachers the architects and pilots of their writing curriculums, and more need to provide them with support.

In the next article, Bob Niebuhr identifies five different approaches to teaching writing. Here are two of the five approaches:

PROCESS IV

A. Tell kids to know something.
B. Tell kids to write what they know.

"I think this is the 'environmental approach.' " Unfortunately it is useful only for writing to demonstrate what has been learned. What about writing to learn?"

PROCESS V

A. Prepare and distribute a list of criteria for a particular writing assignment.
B. Give the assignment.
C. Collect the completed assignment.

"Process V is the perennial favorite of textbook publishers and curriculum coordinators. It's so checklistable!"

Another article's title is as beguiling as its title, "Dr. Faustus, Rodent-Envy, and the Two Party Weekend," by Susan McLester, which makes a perfectly eloquent plea for a writing process that includes a peer group support and evaluation process, freeing the teacher to enjoy weekends and teaching students to think about written expression.

The eloquence and intelligence of all the articles shows that the individuality of teachers and students working together to communicate in a literate way is a theme worthy of our full support. For more information, write The National Writing Project and Center for the Study of Writing, 5627 Tolman Hall, School of Education, University of California, Berkeley, CA 94720. ■

A Review of SUPER CONTEXT

A Cloze Program from Prentice-Hall

Michael Milone, Jr.

The cloze technique is one of the most versatile reading instruction strategies available to a teacher. By randomly or selectively deleting words from a reading passage, the teacher can provide students with a learning experience that is individualized to the student's needs and is based on real reading. The cloze technique can be used to teach everything from phonetic analysis to information synthesis, and can also be a good way to promote the integration of reading and writing skills.

Despite the power of the cloze technique, it is underused in the classroom, chiefly because of the difficulty associated with creating cloze passages. Creating passages, deleting words, inserting underlined blank spaces, and inserting potential choices for the blanks is a time-consuming task, even with a word processor.

At a recent computer conference, I came across a program that appears to be the ultimate "cloze machine"—**Super Context**. The author of the program, Lin Lougheed, gave me a quick demonstration of the program and a beta disk to try on my own. I was impressed with his sincerity and the program's capabilities, and would recommend it for anyone who uses cloze activities.

The program works with ASCII text files created with any word processor. You simply import the file and then doctor it up according to the instructional purpose you have in mind.

Now there are a few other cloze programs on the market, including one that I wrote. None of these programs, however, matches the power of **Super Context**. You can delete words automatically or manually, provide letter clues, identify acceptable substitutes for the deleted word, and provide several types of context clues. If there is some aspect of cloze that this program does not cover, I am not aware of it.

Whether or not you are a cloze fan, I would highly recommend **Super Context**. It is a pedagogically sound program that is easy to use, and in the hands of a creative teacher can create reading activities that are both effective and enjoyable.

Super Context
Prentice Hall, Inc.
c/o Betty E. Colt
Englewood Cliffs, NJ 07632

"Feedback is useful when it is provided during the writing process; it is not useful when it is given after the paper has been completed."

Stephen Krashen in
Writing: Research, Theory and Applications

THE Writing NOTEBOOK

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- **AppleWorks Users Group (TAWUG)** serves as a clearinghouse for AppleWorks data base and spreadsheet templates, as well as notes and comments regarding the word processor. The group also operates a subboard. TAWUG membership is free and the templates available at low cost. For more information, send a self-addressed stamped envelope to The AppleWorks Users Group, P.O. Box 24789, Denver, CO 80224-0789.

- **Third Annual National Story Tree Writing Contest** - Scholastic Inc. is now inviting entries for its Third Annual STORY TREE writing contest. Co-sponsored by Apple Computer Inc., the contest recognizes the imaginative talents of 4th through 9th grade students who use STORY TREE, Scholastic's creative writing program, to write their own adventures, mysteries, or other stories.

  Prizes for the contest will be awarded in two divisions: elementary (grades 4-6) and junior high (grades 7-9). The author of the grand prize-winning story in each of these divisions will receive an Apple® computer. Each of the two winning authors' teachers will also receive an Apple® for classroom use. Additionally, ten stories will be selected for honorable mention in each division. Honorable mention winners will each get $100 worth of Scholastic Software programs.

  Entries may be submitted now through April 30, 1987. A panel of noted educators and authors will judge the stories on the basis of creativity, imagination, story development and the use of the STORY TREE program interactive branching feature. Winners will be announced in May.

- **BOOKNOTES** is a quarterly 4-page newsletter designed to guide parents in selecting books for their children. Subscriptions are $4 a year. For more information or to subscribe contact **BOOKNOTES** c/o Marilyn Carpenter, 1016 5th Ave., Arcadia, CA 91006. Make checks payable to Marilyn Carpenter.

- **THE WRITING NOTEBOOK** staff offers workshops on Connecting Literature to Writing, The Writing Process, and Word Processing and Cooperative Learning. Call Jon Madian at 213/402-8231.

"You must be a great warrior when you contact first thoughts and write from them."

Natalie Goldberg
Writing Down the Bones

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THE Writing NOTEBOOK

April/May 1987

Creative Word Processing in the Classroom

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Who's Who

All of the people listed below are supporting **TWN** this year as members of the **TWN Editorial Advisory Board**, and many of them as contributing editors/networkers on specific topics.

Our profound thanks to each of these people. And we encourage you, as readers of **TWN**, to support topics of interest to you by sending in *your* ideas, articles and activities!

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WRITING ACROSS THE CURRICULUM
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Irene and Owen Thomas. Owen Thomas is a Professor of Education, Literature and Linguistics, University of California, Irvine, and co-director of the UC Irvine Writing Project. Irene Thomas is also an educator and language arts consultant, and a charter member of NCTE's Committee on Educational Technology. Together the Thomases authored and designed The Writing Workshop.

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CURRICULUM RENEWAL AND THE CHINESE CLEAVER

Jon Madian

Technology, methods, and materials offer many new possibilities. But will they improve instruction? Or will buying more technology and instructional programs further confuse already overwhelmed schools?

In many ways, the principles and practices of good instruction haven't changed that much over the years, although we've experienced a number of different curricular fashions. Now the school renewal movement says that effective change must take place at the local level—in the school site. Change from the bottom up. It calls upon teachers to function as professionals in a larger sense and to see themselves as designers of curriculum.

For curriculum renewal to occur successfully from the bottom up, schools and districts must realize that they are in the curriculum design business. They will want to explore how technology can support their design and dissemination efforts, and they will want to form design alliances with curriculum design groups and consultants. Spending less money than they do now for textbooks and district-generated curriculum guides, districts may become co-designers of an "ideal" curriculum—ideal in the sense that teachers will be refining continuously their own curriculum in response to current research, best practices, and their own educational experiences.

Stated in another way, if school districts form curriculum design partnerships using their talented teachers to co-design materials with outside consultants and designers, we will begin to see steady improvement in the quality of our schools. If instead, districts continue to purchase "comprehensive" instructional packages and to write elaborate courses of study, education will continue to flounder.

At Peach Spring School on the Hualapai Reservation in Peach Spring, AZ, education is moved by local curriculum design and by technology. This move toward locally developed and refined curriculum may be easier for these Indian people than for mainstream educators, since mainstream educational programs have never met their needs, and they've had to create many of their own materials. In 1975, for example, the Haulapai Indians invented a written alphabet and spelling for their language. Shortly after, they wrote **SPIRIT MOUNTAIN: An Anthology of Yuman Story and Song.**

Their curriculum is literature based. They write poems about rocks, like the ones on page 9, and they use journals to connect students to writing as self-expression and self-discovery.

Each of the 8 classrooms has 3 computers in addition to a computer lab with 21 machines. Next year's goals include a new computer lab for writing, and improving their literature-based lessons to include more dramatic interpretation, thinking skills, and a wide range of writing activities—poetry, essays, stories, letters, and personal and study journals.

They are ordering books of stories and poems. Many of the stories are chosen for their use of language patterns that inspire writing, and units are built around this literature. Students develop writing fluency and revision skills through use of teacher-developed word processing techniques and materials. Desktop publishing is encouraged.

Most exciting from the perspective of curriculum renewal, it seems likely that the teachers at Peach Spring School will use word processing to organize lesson plans and support materials. Such a library of experience-generated instructional materials and methods, refined through use, may prove to be one of the greatest educational legacies that technology offers.

How many centuries of use led to the design of the Chinese cleaver? And how long has it lasted? Perhaps in looking at curriculum, we need to begin designing a Chinese cleaver and stop rushing to make quick fixes. It's time to design a curriculum process that will last. ■

Writing Across the Curriculum—

Sharon Franklin

The creating of this issue has been a particular pleasure for me. The topic, Writing Across the Curriculum, carries with it the energy and exhilaration of teaching at its very best. Many of us are drawn to the concept of writing in all subject areas precisely because we can engage both intellect and emotion, fact and philosophy, reality and imagination.

As students write poetry, stories, dialogues, dreams, plays, and myths in conjunction with social studies, math, science, art, language arts, and music, they learn to see themselves in time, as part of the Big Picture that is their time on earth and for all time that came before and will come after. I believe that this experience enables our students—all of us—to feel more grounded on the earth, more responsible and full of purpose, and. . . more connected to each other.

Our lives are at once ordinary and mythical.
We live and die, age beautifully or full of wrinkles.
We wake in the morning, buy yellow cheese, and
hope to have enough money to pay for it. At the
same instant we have these magnificent hearts that
pump through all sorrow and all winters we are alive
on the earth. We are important and our lives are
important, magnificent really, and their details are
worthy to be recorded. This is how writers must
think, this is how we must sit down with pen in hand.
We were born, we are human beings, this is how we
think. Let it be known, the earth passed before us.
Our details are important. Otherwise, if they are not,
we can drop a bomb and it doesn't matter. ■

Natalie Goldberg
Writing Down the Bones

THANK YOU

Sharon Franklin

Already it's the last issue of the school year for **The Writing Notebook**. My thanks to all of you who contributed so much to this year's issues, and specal, special thanks to all Editorial Advisory Board membes: Peter Anderson, Anne Auten, Judy Bachman, Gerald H. Block, Bruce Fleury, Karen Jostad, Shirley Keran, Larry Lewin, Stephen Marcus, Michael Milone, Jr., Henry Olls, Craig Peck, Tim Riordon, Irene Thomas, Owen Thomas, and Keith Wetzel. I am well aware of how busy you all are, and your energy and willingness to meet deadlines and your dedication in spreading the word about **The Writing Notebook** with your colleagues given your otler commitments has never gone unnoticed. It has mean a great deal to the success of **The Writing Notebok** this year.

And to all readers—a very special summer. If you re attending conferences or workshops during the summr, either as a speaker or attendee, and would be willing to tke along copies of **The Writing Notebook** andor brochures, please let us know and we'll be glad to get sone to you. This is one of the best ways to let people knw about **The Writing Notebook**.

And one last thing...if you have an idea for an artle that you think just might be good in **The Writig Notebook**, please contact me! There's another whle volume being planned as we speak! ■

The AustraAlaskan Project

For the past four years there has been an ongoing telecommunications project involving schools from the most isolated northern part of Alaska and schools from Australia. It began as a simple idea by a teacher from the small Eskimo village of Wainwright. He wanted to exchange information with students at Turramurra High School in Sydney.

Students ranging from third grade on up through high school became involved with this sharing in the forms of **letter writing, news and current events, and creative writing** such as poetry and short stories. The project soon grew to include many schools in the North Slope Borough School District and a large number of schools in Australia. It became very clear that more schools from Australia wanted to take part in the program than one district in Alaska could support.

During the spring of 1986 the project invited all school districts in Alaska to join. There are presently about 15 districts involved, and many more are organizing their efforts in this direction.

There are currently **35 schools in Australia** that are ready to become actively involved. It would be fantastic if this project could be expanded to **form a triangle from Alaska to the "Lower 49" to Australia**. There are already several schools in New Mexico beginning their involvement.

This is a very neat and easy way for students to exchange ideas and information.

The Project Goals

1. Letter writing
2. Report writing on local culture
3. Newspaper items
4. Myths (which may provide the basis of dramatic work)
5. Poetry writing

Who May Participate and How?

Anyone with a microcomputer and a modem may take part in the Austra-USA Project. You do not have to have a certain type of computer or a certain piece of software to become a part of the project. **Any** software that allows you to log on to Tymnet and send or receive files will do!

The electronic mail service that is used for the project is run by Alascom in Anchorage. It is called **ONLINE**. The costs involved are very reasonable—there is no initial start-up fee, and the usage rates are approximately $7/hr. There is a monthly base charge of $10 for a single user, but if you have several sites that will be using ONLINE, the cost will average out to a lower amount.

For more information on the AustraAlaskan Project, contact:

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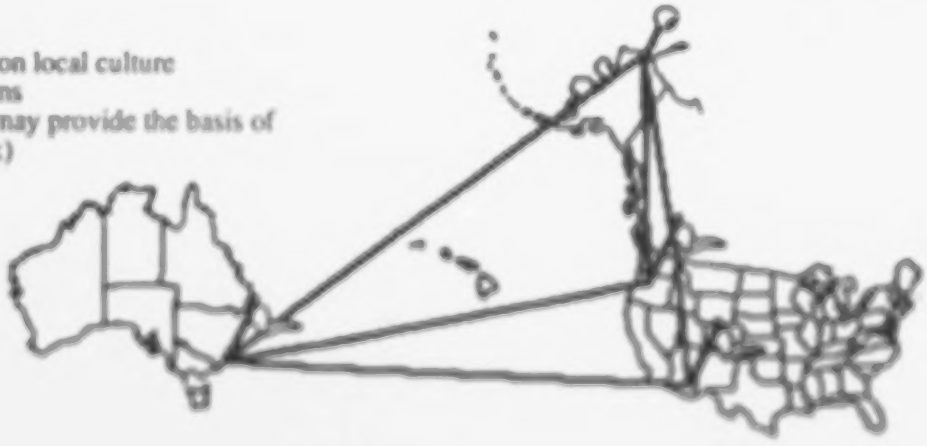
RAM Center
Lake Oswego Public Schools
Lake Oswego, OR 97034
(503) 635-0338

For specific information about Alascom contact:

Jackie Wellman or Linda Phillips
Alascom, Inc.
P.O. Box 6607
Anchorage, AK 99502
(907) 264-7396 ■



Computers, Education, and the UK—
Reflections on a Visit with Daniel Chandler

Irene D. Thomas

One of the most interesting professional stops on our European jaunt was a visit with Daniel Chandler. Daniel, one of the best known software designers in the United Kingdom, lives and works in a 200-year-old farmhouse, nestled into one of Central Wales' lush valleys.

Daniel's software efforts lean in the direction of encouraging thinking skills through game-oriented logic activities and utilities that are mostly content-free. Like most other teachers in the UK, he is not interested in the "drills and skills" format, believing that this is a poor use of computer time in schools. His most recent project, ANTICS, is a thoroughly engaging game that teaches children to "think about thinking." (We wished that we could show it in this country; unfortunately it runs only on the BBC Acorn.) It is accompanied by a board game, which the children use first, and it calls for making simultaneous moves with the computer as opponent. Children learn strategy by having to figure out the computer's strategy and eventually by creating a pattern of strategies for other players. Now being tested in its prototype form, ANTICS gets rave reviews from schoolchildren.

We also liked one of his earlier programs called TALKBACK, which allows children to create two characters and write a dialogue between them, assisted by built-in prompts and models. We believe that this strategy could be an excellent model for a teacher-made file activity to accompany a specific word processor. You could simply enter the lines of one character and leave space for the student to write the responses of a second character. Lots of learning potential here for both writing and literature.

ANTICS, however, suffers the plight of many good projects in England—it hasn't been made available yet by its publishers (BBC), because they claim not to have the money for packaging and distributing! There lies the biggest difference between the UK and the US: commercial market development is still in infant stages. Most software is developed by people like Daniel who receive a grant from the government (through such institutions as the BBC). Once the software is ready to go, BBC still has to raise government or private money because of its nonprofit status. Here, of course, we have the advantage of a profit-driven market, which makes many offerings available; at the same time, we have been deluged with a good deal of quick-profit software that would never pass muster with British teachers and wouldn't have been funded in the first place. As we wished aloud so often in our travels, there ought to be a way to combine the best of both systems.

There is a good deal of controversy raging in the UK about how, when, and if computers should play a major role in the curriculum. Daniel noted that schools will have to move along though, in spite of reluctance, because a computer will be in every home in 10 years or less (the British are computer "nuts"), and this fact can't be ignored by the schools. He liked our idea, for example, that before long children should be able to take home a "homework diskette" on which they would complete ongoing tasks and assignments, many of which could be altered as new knowledge or skills are acquired.

One familiar stumbling block in both countries is money. At a time when government support in the UK for basic supplies (paper, books, etc.) is dwindling, teachers have to question the economics and relative worth of each medium. That, of course, leads to much skepticism. Sound familiar? Daniel would like to see children having more say in the way computers are used. As much as he favors word processing as a tool, he believes that children should do more talking and prewriting before ever touching a keyboard. He'd like to see THEM decide, for example, when word processing is the right tool to use for a particular writing task.

Another concern we shared with Daniel is the traditional inflexibility of traditional school time structure. We agreed that as long as computer time is strictly limited to a rigid time slot between bells, the most interesting problem-solving software—one of the best uses of the computer—will never be accepted. Problem solving requires time for discoveries, unexpected insights, and wrong turns, none of which are necessarily allowed for in our present classrooms. Although the best software can serve as a catalyst toward new "time processing," we agreed that change will only occur when school leaders and teachers WANT change. And if we agree that thinking and "thinking about thinking" should have a higher priority in our curricula, then we must call for changes of great magnitude. ■

FrEd Writing

Bruce Fleury

Computer Organized Writing • Part 2

In the last issue we saw one of the most powerful features of **FrEdWriter**—its ability to guide and organize student writing. Using **FrEdWriter's** prompted writing techniques, teachers can create templates to guide student writing.

As you recall from the last issue, a template is a series of teacher-made questions or prompts that appear on the computer screen. A student responds to each prompt by writing at the keyboard. The student's writing appears on the screen along with the prompts. The prompts lead the student through writing steps designed by the teacher to produce a well organized draft. After the prompts have guided the student through the writing task, they disappear; the student's responses are printed without the prompts.

The use of such prompts allows students to practice writing within the structure and organization of the teacher-made template. The student can then read with pride his or her own well structured writing without the prompts. This can be a immense step toward building understanding and use of structure and organization in writing.

A template is made up of many prompts. Below is a sample of just one prompt (notice that the prompt is in a box) and the student's response.

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IIII
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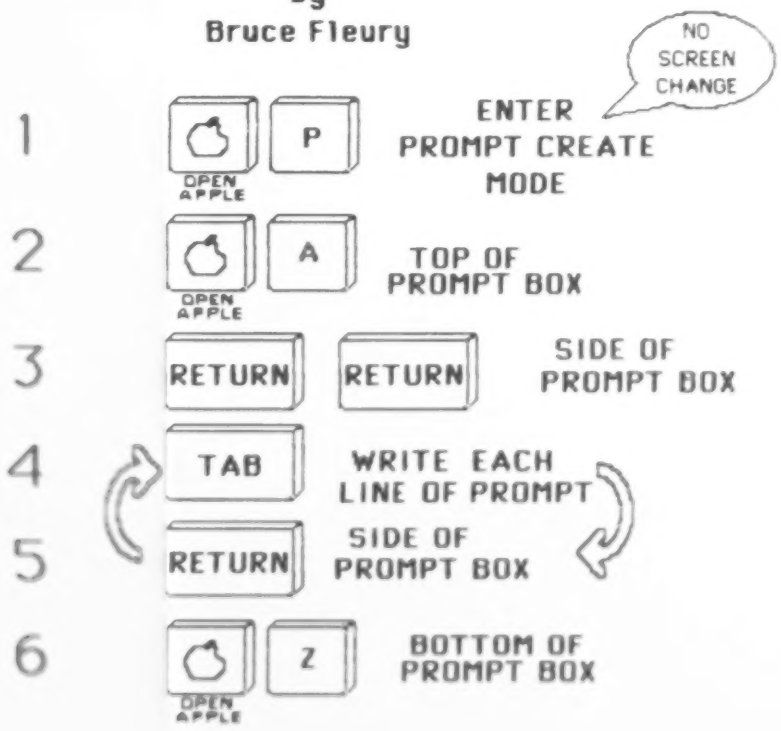
Creating Prompts

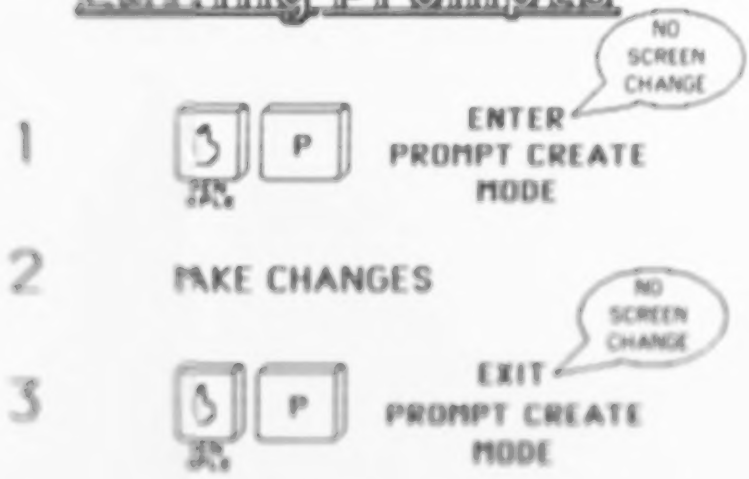
COMPUTER ORGANIZED WRITING

by

Bruce Fleury



Editing Prompts



FIVE HELPFUL TIPS FOR TEACHERS WHO CREATE THEIR OWN COMPOSITION MATERIALS

Tanis Knight

After several years of refocused inservices and new information in the literature, many more teachers are now attempting to teach composition with a focus on the writing process. Consequently, these instructors have developed new prewriting strategies to use with different age groups, and have experimented with varied revision, editing, and publishing techniques. All of this effort naturally translates to countless hours of preparation time. The reward, though, is a classroom-tested file cabinet full of valued writing activities and support materials. Each new idea reflects that teacher's interpretation of the research on improved composition instruction.

As I visit classrooms in our district, teachers are always eager to show me their latest instructional creations. The products are as many and varied as the personalities of the developers. Recently I sat down with a group of these language arts teachers. After comparing the vastly different writing projects currently ongoing in their classrooms, we came around to discussing what, if any, "tips" for success they could identify after working with the writing process for five or more years. As a team, we eventually concurred on the following five points. These are simple insights or practices that include a lot of common sense. Yet, they can be easily overlooked when designing materials. The teachers in the group felt strongly, however, that each suggestion had improved significantly their effectiveness as curriculum planners.

1. COMMUNICATE GRADING CRITERIA

As teachers lead students toward the final "publishing" stage of written work, they are now often distributing grading sheets or scoring rubrics to record evaluative comments. These devices are often useful to both teachers and students, because they specifically delineate how grades will be determined. They also help cut down on paperwork. One caution should be noted, though. Rather than wait until the final draft has been completed to distribute these sheets, our group recommends sharing grading guidelines immediately after the first "fluency" drafts have been completed. This way, the information can be used to help guide students through the revision process, and students do not have to try and guess what the teacher wants in terms of a top quality piece of work. Here, a slight timing change can make a big difference.

> ***"Teachers at all levels are encouraged to offer students a consistent, revolving menu of writing experiences that include imaginative, informative, persuasive, and analytical tasks."***

2. VARY THE "MENU" OF WRITING ASSIGNMENTS

The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) recently completed its fourth, large-scale assessment of student writing skills nationwide. While students across grade levels displayed minimum proficiency with imaginative or informative writing tasks, they fell woefully short on tasks where they were required to use analytic or persuasive skills in their compositions. Our teachers agreed that it is significantly more difficult to construct writing activities that do a good job of promoting such higher level thinking competencies. Even if students initially resist such assignments, we believe it is imperative to persevere. Students should be given such tasks as early as fourth grade, and by the time they are in high school it seems reasonable to expect that students will do written analysis or argumentation at least once every three weeks. It also seems best to provide these writing projects with sufficient prewriting class discussion and

demonstration, so that students can experience how ideas are actually developed.

As an interesting aside, the NAEP study also indicated that imaginative writing tends to become the primary domain of elementary teachers, while high school teachers play down writing opportunities of this type. The findings encourage teachers at all levels to offer students a consistent, revolving menu of writing experiences to include imaginative, informative, persuasive, and analytical tasks.

3. CONSIDER SHARING WORK ORALLY

An examination of many top-notch writing programs might well reveal productive, yet largely silent classrooms. There, students industriously generate drafts and then, with equal concentration, work to revise or edit their own work or the work of others. This tremendous emphasis on reading the written word may be appropriate—and effective—for some but not all learning styles. Teachers in our schools concluded that reading work aloud or asking students to listen for content analysis are both motivating for students and useful alternative tools for reshaping written work. Obviously, there are countless uses of this "oral" option. For example, rather than publishing via bulletin boards or bookmaking, simply reading outstanding work aloud to the class may carry a powerful reinforcement message. Similarly, the oral reading of work in editing groups may force students to concentrate more on the ideas of a piece rather than just handwriting or mechanics. Even at the prewriting stage, many students find it very helpful to tell their ideas to another partner before they begin drafting. While a blending of all types of techniques is preferred, teachers may want to post a reminder for themselves to consider the oral option when it is appropriate.

4. INCLUDE BOTH PERSONAL AND STRUCTURED WRITING

Several teachers in our group commented on the debate to allow students to write personally from experience verses a more traditional approach, where teachers structure writing assignments to meet specific outcomes. Sometimes, it was noted, new teachers or teachers experiencing composition inservice for the first time, get the feeling that they must choose between approaches. Certainly, both philosophies have their advocates and valid arguments. Most teachers in our community, however, have found that it makes sense to use a balance of both structured and personal writing to accomplish all composition goals. Perhaps a 60/40 split in favor of personal writing is most justifiable at the elementary level, while the same breakdown in favor of more structured writing at the high school level could be used as a guideline.

5. STREAMLINE GOALS FOR WRITING ASSIGNMENTS

Finally, the group endorsed an idea to reduce the performance goals for any piece of writing to a manageable few. They found it useful to focus on just one or two new areas of emphasis in the following categories: content, structure, editing criteria, and participation in the writing process. By communicating these outcome goals clearly to students, and gradually building up a cumulative repertoire of skills, our local teachers felt that students were more willing to try for success and less likely to feel overwhelmed. Likewise, teachers can shorten the time needed for grading and still give students precise feedback.

Conclusion

Obviously, many teachers are already using the ideas expressed above. Certainly they are not revolutionary. Perhaps other educators would disagree with any one of these tenets. For us, the important result of this exercise was simply the discussion of "what we believe." Any time teachers in a building or district can meet to discuss their own convictions, it can only lead to a vital exchange of ideas—and ultimately better instruction for kids. ■

Tanis Knight is Director of Curriculum and Instruction for the Camas School District in southwest Washington. Prior to her work in Camas, Ms. Knight was the director of Project WRITE, a federally funded writing project for grades K-12. Project WRITE is currently in use in over 30 school districts in both Oregon and Washington.

Angry Clouds and Frighty Fears—
SCIENCE POEMS

Peach Spring School has a nice rock collection that makes the rounds. In Lucille Walker's 4th grade class, students studied the earth and the rocks. These poems were printed out, unsigned, one poem per page, in large ***Print Shop*** *letters:*

Earth
The earth is
round
Made up of crust
Mantle, and core.
It floats out in
space,
It turns and
turns,
And I live on the
Earth

Earth
Earth
You are round
You smell fresh
And you delight me
Earth

Rocks
Rocky smooth
Hard and sharp
Bumpy
Round
Gray and Pointed

Rocks are hard
They do not grow
Some are small
Some are big
Some are round

The rock
Makes a bump
On my head

In Patti Swaaley's 3rd grade class, students observed some winter storms:

Snowing in the night,
The thunder booming in fright.
Out through the frightning night,
Raining with grayish clouds
My dad and me with frighty fears.
Bobby

Clouds are all white, letting snowflakes drop
down, down, down, right in my hands.
Look in the sky, the sun is coming out.
Oh, now I can cook cookies to eat.
Under the sun is a rainbow.
Down by the rainbow there is an elf.
Scott

Black clouds are in the sky.
Loud lightning thunder is coming down with rain.
All the people are shivering in fear.
Cold cloudy weather makes me scared.
Kitten on my hand, trying to die
Tina

The lightning flash in the gloomy storm,
Horror brought to the area
Under the hall outside I shiver fearing thunder,
Nobody to be with
Doomed in the disaster,
Eek! Eek! shriek with fright,
Rain dropping in horror.
Michael

Cold ugly weather and you're shivering with fear,
Loud booming clouds screaming at the windows.
Out the rain comes from the clouds,
Umbrellas bloom once I come outside
Dark clouds close together and roar!!
Neal

Growing thunder in the sky.
Rain dropping very hard,
Angry clouds seeking revenge.
You and me are in a terrible storm.
Matt

Cold cloudy weather makes me shiver and shiver.
Out I go in the gloomy, doomy, ice place.
Loud as thunder I shiver, shiver, shiver.
Down I go to the end of the lightning.
Zabina

Great big clouds pillow me at night.
Ride in a car in the rain.
A huge dark black cloud can throw
hailstones at you.
Yuck, it's pouring outside.
Bryan

Write to Think: Teaching about Social Conflict through Imaginative Writing

Bill Bigelow and Linda Christiansen

We wanted our students to know more than the facts and dates that comprise history; we wanted them to understand why people took the actions they did; we wanted them to experience vicariously the motives, desires, and frustrations people faced when they made historical decisions. We wanted our students to empathize with different cultures. And we wanted our students to understand that they themselves are the actors, the participants in today's society—the ones making daily decisions, the ones responsible for the history their children will learn.

But how? As a social studies teacher known for his role plays and as an English teacher known for her poetry and story assignments, our answer was imaginative writing—the writing of dialogues, short stories, letters, diaries, poems, and plays.

Initially, we felt apprehensive. While few argue that the essay is out of place in a social studies classroom, few see the necessity of "imaginative writing." Some English teachers even call it "fluff"—dealing with human feelings and emotion, rather than with factual data that can be compared, contrasted, analyzed, and more easily graded by objective criteria.

We were surprised by the impact this writing had on our students. When they wrote imaginatively using social studies materials, students began to appreciate the complexities of human behavior and to sort out the factors that contribute to why people think and act as they do. And this is what social studies is all about.

> *What I remember about your history class was becoming different people in history—like when I had to write a speech as a white Southerner who wanted to push the Cherokees off the land. I hated the Southerners' point of view, but after writing, I understood their motives and I understood how they became corrupted.*
>
> *Anne Tillinghast*
> *Grade 11*

Our thanks to Linda Christiansen, co-author of ***Write to Think: Teaching about Social Conflict through Imaginative Writing****, for sharing the Introduction from* ***Write to Think****.*

The following are some examples of writing assignments we've given. Together they demonstrate the importance of imaginative writing as an integral part of any social studies unit.

Dialogues

A dialogue is a stripped-down short story: Students concentrate only on the thoughts of two individuals and aren't required to provide descriptions of setting or plot. But, as in short story assignments, students invent characters who assume lives and attitudes that may take on an independence from their creator.

One such assignment is part of a unit on the 1930s.[1] We provide a background reading depicting life for blacks and whites in rural Arkansas in 1935. Students learn that a union is being formed, but unlike many previous attempts at tenant farmer or sharecropper unions, this one will be integrated. Based on the reading, on students' knowledge of past organizing drives, and even of their own racial attitudes, the class brainstorms possible resistance of both whites and blacks to becoming members of the same union. For example, many white farmers will obviously have attitudes of superiority toward blacks and have difficulty admitting that in order to accomplish their own objectives they need blacks. For their part, blacks would have few reasons to trust whites. Many would have received harsh treatment at the hands of whites and would, with reason, anticipate the same from those in the union.

[1] From Norman Diamond and William Bigelow, **The Power In Our Hands: A Curriculum on the History of Work and Workers in the United States** (unpublished).

After thinking through these possible racial antagonisms, each student is assigned to write a dialogue between a black tenant farmer and a white tenant farmer. One farmer is an organizer, the other a skeptic who is doubtful that, given the history of tension and violence between blacks and whites, this move toward unionization has much chance of success. Students decide for themselves the race of the organizer and that of the skeptic.

As they write their dialogues, students climb inside two heads: one of an individual who doesn't believe whites and blacks can work together, and another of someone who believes they must. It's a history assignment and a writing assignment, but it's also much more. The issue of racism is a contemporary one, and the thinking process students have to go through in completing the assignment requires them to deal with questions that are not, unfortunately, limited to the past: Why are some people of one race reluctant to work with and trust individuals of another race? What experiences, what beliefs sustain those racist attitudes?

When students write as the union organizer, they confront this prejudice. They develop arguments explaining why people of different races should work together and what people can achieve in unity that they can't in isolation. Indeed, students may have to respond critically and intelligently to some of their own racial biases.

As each character responds to the other in the dialogue, students challenge themselves to come up with better and more thoughtful arguments—on both sides. Students go much further than a replay of already-received information. They probe the minds and feelings of their characters and the result is something wholly new.

Typically, and refreshingly, some students may reinterpret the assignment, as with Jeff, who chose to have his dialogue argued by two black workers. Here is an excerpt:

Tom: Frank, you ain't making no sense. Why should I join this union?

Frank: Tom, if you do, then other black brothers will join. Soon all the blacks would be in the union. Then and only then would we be able to control the planters instead of them controlling us.

Tom: Frank, this gun is all the control I need. I can do anything I want if I got this gun.

Frank: Can you keep your job with that gun? Can that gun help you out when you're starving? Can that gun keep your family together? Can you feed yourself with that gun? No. The gun you have there just keeps you from trusting folks enough to give them half a chance to help you.

Tom: Frank, I just see a bunch of white men wanting my five dollars. There ain't no white man going to go out of his way for a black man. Wasn't ever like that, never will be like that.

Tom eventually does join the union, but without conviction. Jeff acted out his dialogue with another student and helped lead a discussion of why Tom maintained his attitudes and whether Frank could have used other arguments in winning Tom to the union.

This assignment also allowed the class to learn what might have remained vague and theoretical had we just asserted it: that sometimes no amount of "right" arguments can change someone's thinking; frequently, attitudes can change only with new experiences. But what is important for us here is that this sophisticated thinking came alive for students because we engaged their imaginations as writers.

Diaries and Letters

Diaries and letters, like dialogues, allow students to view an event, historical time period, or culture as if they were part of it. The difference is that diaries and letters are more familiar forms and therefore easier for students to write. In diaries, students can imagine the anguish of an accused woman during the Salem witch trials, the fear and wonder of immigrants arriving at Ellis Island, or the outrage of Homestead steelworkers watching their comrades shot by hired thugs. Through these chronicles students come to understand why some women chose to die rather than lie, and why steelworkers met force with force.

While diaries record life's daily happenings and reflect the feelings associated with those happenings, letters allow students to explain an event to another person. One exercise that produced an insightful response called for students to assume the roles of Boston merchants in 1776 and to write letters to relatives in Great Britain explaining their reaction to the coming American Revolution. The letters not only captured some of the radical eloquence of the Declaration of Independence, they also revealed deep fears. Our merchants' messages home fretted that the raised expectations of the lower classes unleashed by the revolution could ultimately threaten property and social position.

In another assignment, students imagined they were American soldiers in Vietnam writing letters home. One of our students was so caught up in her letter that she chose to perform it for the class. Dressed in battle fatigues and carrying a tape recorder blaring the Rolling Stones' "Sympathy for the Devil," she entered the darkened classroom, turned down the music, sat on the floor, and read a haunting letter to the little brother of a shell-shocked GI. It was certainly an experience for her and for the class that few other assignments would have produced. Such exercises bring students close enough to an event for them to imagine real people in real circumstances—to connect the characters and emotions with the words.

Short Stories

In our study of South Africa,[2] students are asked to write a story based on real-life situations encountered by people in that country. Before the lesson students have completed a number of activities, including role plays, films, and readings. Immediately preceding the assignment, students read one of a number of short stories or excerpts from various South African novels. We discuss the content of the stories with students, as well as the different literary techniques each uses to convey a particular idea or feeling. We draw students' attention, for example, to the writers' use of metaphors and similes, such as Alex La Guma's description of a white constable in *And A Threefold Cord*: "He was a short heavy man with thick, whitish eyebrows that writhed and wriggled when he spoke, like fat maggots curling and uncurling above his eyes, and he had a small thin mouth, like a bloodless stab wound."

Next we give students handouts that suggest story choices: A white woman tells her black servant that she'll have to send her new baby to the bantustans (barren tribal reserves) if she wants to keep her job. Or another: A black husband and wife live legally in Soweto, the sprawling African township outside Johannesburg. They have been asked by a friend in a bantustan if he can come live with them—illegally. We offer many other ideas and don't limit students to the suggestions on the handouts, but in our experience they feel more secure if provided lists of possible topics. Generally, the best work comes from students absorbed by the stories they write, who go beyond the initial task to create people who move us because they are struggling with their consciences or against an oppressive society.

This assignment generates a kind of thinking and a quality of thinking that a film, reading, or worksheet has difficulty matching. The story format urges students into the lives and minds of South Africans who then create a vivid fragment of South African social reality by recording that world on paper. While students may or may not sympathize or agree with the behavior of their characters, they will achieve much higher levels of understanding about why those characters think and behave as they do. The story persuades students to work with concepts they've learned about South Africa and fosters independent thinking by allowing students freedom to reflect on the facts and issues, to ask questions, and to explore possibilities without worrying about whether they are right or wrong.

As students search out details to make their stories believable, both they and the teacher become aware of gaps in their comprehension: Can whites go into black townships? Can a "colored" and an African get married? Are unions legal for blacks? And students learn by having to describe the South African landscape: What kind of weather would South Africa have in December? What type of terrain surrounds the city of Durban? At night, would there be any blacks on the streets of a white city in South Africa? The story becomes an evaluative tool for the teacher: What have students learned? Are there common misunderstandings within the class? Do caricatures recur frequently?

Some of the experiences we've had with this assignment remind us of the story of Flaubert finishing his novel *Madame Bovary*. As he completes his writing, he staggers down the stairs weeping and says, "I didn't know she was going to die." We may not have encountered any Flauberts yet, but through writing their stories our students have become quite drawn in to the human dramas of their own creation. Concepts and information covered earlier in the unit become more textured, more nuanced. One student, Ruth, didn't sympathize with the white middle class woman in her story who forced the black maid to send her baby to a desolate bantustan, but she learned a lot about why somebody would do a thing like that. David was hardly prepared for the challenge to his pacifist convictions posed by the African National Congress guerrillas he created in his story. And the writing is essential to this new level of engagement with the material. No longer passive observers in the classroom, students create their own learning.

The learning continues as students share their works with one another. One year, in a class of students with relatively low skills who were unaccustomed to sharing work with each other, every individual volunteered to read his or her story. Certainly part of this success can be attributed to students' feelings of repugnance at the racial injustices in South Africa and the compassion and outrage that situation calls forth. The story assignment allows for expression of those feelings. Students at a nearby high school were so delighted by their stories that they produced a book, *Stories From the Heart of South Africa*.

Poetry

"This isn't an English class, ya know," is not an infrequently heard refrain when we introduce poetry during a class on contemporary world problems. But students stop objecting as they become absorbed in the drama of the examples we share with them. Students quickly learn that poetry can be a personal statement of feeling and at the same time a commentary on society. In few words a poem distills a political/social reality into a clear, personal picture. As in other writing, poetry reflects and critiques reality—but it accomplishes this with more intimacy and economy.

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[2] From William Bigelow, **Strangers In Their Own Country: A Curriculum Guide on South Africa**. Africa World Press, 1985.

In a unit we teach on Central America, we brought in Carolyn Forche's book, *The Country Between Us*, and read "Selective Service," a poem about the loss of friends in Vietnam. The students were silent after the reading. When they caught their breath, we asked, "How did the poem make you feel?" The answers varied, but James' response was typical: "I always thought about Vietnam as being in the past. I never thought that something like that could still happen to me." When we asked what in the poem sparked these reactions, they talked about Forche's image of our people "building their armies again, short years after body bags, after burnings."

As Forche's poem is addressed to today's students ("You were at that time learning fractions"), our assignment calls for students to write a poem to her in response. Before writing, we brainstorm questions they might have for this sensitive "survivor" of the Vietnam period and discuss their reactions to the implicit warnings in her poem.

In other units we encourage students to write poems toward the end of a period of study in order to personalize the experience. To help them get started, we sometimes read poetry by writers who were involved in the events and then use those poems as springboards for students' own writing. We also show slides or prints recalling some of the events we've been studying. As we present these, students are asked to compile a list of words and expressions that may help them reflect on the unit and provide ideas for poems.

The poetry assignment encourages students to ask "What did all this mean to me?" They create images that personalize understandings of a particular society, historical period, or conflict. Look at the following poem written by Joel, an 11th-grade student, in response to our unit on South Africa:

A Diamond

There was a woman
in a jewelry store
trying on diamond earrings.

She didn't know
that she was also
wearing crystallized tears
wept by thousands of
black miners.

Diamonds have an inner facet
not often talked about
by the salesmen at
Zales
or Tiffany's.

That facet is clouded
with thousands of people
choking and dying
from intense
heat
and dust.

Masses of black people
forced by poverty
to drain, chop, stab,
burn and suck
the land of its riches
until it becomes
nothing more than dead gravel.
Afterwards, as "superfluous appendages,"
they are forced to live on it.

Their crystallized tears
are bought by white people
who wear them
around their necks,
wrists and fingers
shamelessly advertising
the spilled blood
of the Zulu and Xhosa.

Joel chose the diamond to represent his sense of pain of South Africans, and through the juxtaposition of two worlds, our complicity in their suffering. Whatever the students' perspectives, the assignment allows them, if only briefly, to shake off what they were **supposed** to learn and to decide what they **did** learn.

We in the social studies are charged with a herculean task. We must help students learn the facts of history, of world cultures, of current events. That job alone is hard enough. But we need to help students make **sense** of those facts—to analyze, to interpret, even to judge. And finally, it's our job to convey a feeling for the real people who make and remake history daily.

Imaginative writing is an enormous aid in accomplishing these objectives, because it calls for a new level of intellectual and emotional involvement from our students. It helps us achieve our basic goal as educators: to develop student questioners and thinkers, participating actively in their own learning. Imaginative writing is an exciting alternative to the standard fare of expository writing. It can and should be an integral component in all social studies teaching. ■

[Linda Christiansen, 2814 NE Mason, Portland, OR 97211]

Writing in the Media Center

Sharon Franklin

Libraries are a *great* place for kids to write! The library is a natural place to encourage the reading/writing connection, classroom teachers are usually eager to schedule additional student time in the library or in their classrooms to complete an activity if needed, and units can be planned jointly with teachers to support classroom areas of study in almost any curriculum area.

Wilfrid Gordon McDonald Partridge
By Mem Fox; illustrated by Julie Vivas
Kane/Miller Book Publishers, 1985
P.O. Box 529, Brooklyn, NY 11231

One of the best ways to think of good writing activities in the library is to start with books that you love. **Wilfrid Gordon McDonald Partridge** is just that sort of book. It's one that you will want to own, and one that you will be continually sharing with friends. The story is touching and beautifully told, and the soft watercolor illustrations carry great emotion and power. Although I suppose it is for "elementary-age" students, I always resist those judgments—this book has much to give people of any age.

Wilfrid is a small boy ("who wasn't very old either"). He lives next door to an old people's home, and he gets to know all the old people who live there. His best friend is Miss Nancy, to whom he tells all his secrets. When Wilfrid hears his parents talking about how sad it is that Miss Nancy has lost her memory, he is not certain what a memory is, but he sets out to find a memory for his friend.

After reading the story, let students talk about the book. What do they know about memories? Are there different kinds of memories? In what ways do we remember things? Can they think of a favorite memory? How can a person tell if they really remember something, or if someone has simply told them about it so often that it is familiar to them? (Does it matter??) What does it mean to "lose your memory?" Where do those lost memories go? Do students know anyone who has lost his or her memory like Miss Nancy?

This book is a great starting place for lots of writing about "Memories."

• Students can talk to their families and gather memories from them, or they can pick a memory of their own and write about it.

• Encourage each student to bring in a shoebox with three objects representing their own special memories in it. They can write about those objects.

• Fill a box with a number of objects of your choosing, and have students pick one of those objects and write about it as their "memory." Then have them choose one of the objects and write about it from the point of view of one of the old people in the story.

• They have probably discovered by now that there are all kinds of memories that evoke many different emotions. Have students take one of the objects from your box that they have written about. What emotion did it evoke? Now have them write about the same object, but ask them to create a new memory of the object that carries with it an entirely different emotion.

• Any of the writing ideas above will lend themselves easily to writing poetry. Students also will enjoy writing recipe poems for "How to Make a Memory." All their recipes can be illustrated, compiled into a "cookbook," and printed up for each student to take home.

• One exciting poetry assignment involves creating a box of "characters" representing different time periods, cultures, or backgrounds. Have students draw a card out of the box and write a poem that would reflect a memory of that person—for example, a young girl travelling across

the Oregon Trail in the 1800s; a young man just home from the war; a young person who has just arrived in the New World in the 1600s; a young Asian woman who has left her family in China to come here to study; a famous composer or inventor; or a young person who has spent the last year travelling around the country.

• Now take the idea one step further. How about the memory of a shell carried home by a small boy from the beach, a tiger brought to a zoo from the wild, flowers just picked for a bouquet, a child's first teddy bear, or a Navaho rug just purchased from an antique dealer? You may want to select certain people, animals, or objects that represent a specific social studies or science unit.

• The group might want to study memory from a scientific point of view as part of a science unit in their class. What recent discoveries have been made?

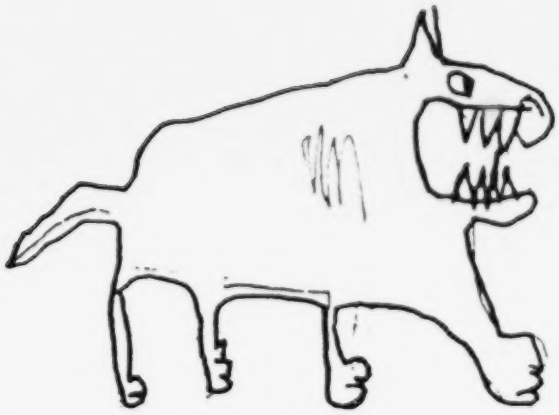
• A Class Memory Book is an especially good idea for 5th grade students who will be entering middle school next year. Students may choose to organize the book into chapters that will help them to record the events, projects, people, friends, and feelings they most want to remember about their last year in elementary school. They may want to ask other people such as their librarian, teacher, and principal to write something as well. Made into a book, it will become a real keepsake.

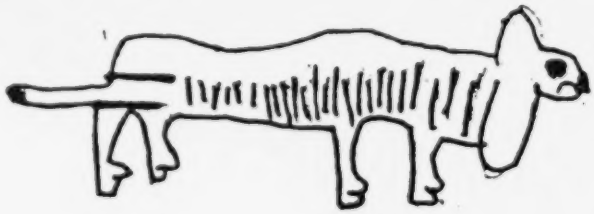
The idea that we are creating our own memories each day makes for a very rich discussion with students and is a good place to end the unit. What kind of memories do we want to have for this day?—for the end of the school year?—when we're "old?" Students can leave with the idea that they are going out to "make a memory"—make it a **WONDERFUL** one! ■

Sharon Franklin, in addition to editing TWN, is a former Media Specialist who happily still manages to continue her connection with children, books, and libraries!

Ga, ga, goo, goo,
The baby doesn't know the dog.
Bow, wow,
The dog is barking at the baby.
Ga, ga, wa, wa,
The baby is afraid.
Ruff, ruff,
The bulldog is scaring the little dog.
Ga, ga, doo, doo,
The baby says, "Hurray for the bulldog."
Gar, gar,
The bulldog says, "Don't mention it!"

by Aditya Prabhakar
1st Grade





How Do I Know What They Think Until I Hear Them Say It?

Steve Boyarsky

It was lunch time at Medford's Bear Creek Rotary Club. I was seated with two members, one a businessman and the other a college administrator. I broke the silence.

"Let me pose a question to both of you, since I'm in the business of educating high school students," I began. "What do you see as critical skills high school students need to be successful college students or employees?"

Don, a local plumbing contractor, answered first. "The first thing I need is someone who is dependable, reliable, honest, and hard working. I'm not sure how much control you as a teacher have over those factors. Beyond that, I want someone who can reason, get along with others, and can communicate well."

Jerry, a former biology professor and now administrator, replied, "As a college instructor, I always felt it didn't matter how much science students knew—we could teach them that. If a student came to us with the ability to read and comprehend, the ability to speak and write, and the self-discipline to work independently, that student would be successful."

In posing the same question to former students, the common thread in all responses was again the importance of communication skills and thinking skills. With this in mind, I became involved with the Oregon Writing Project and began infusing more writing into my science classroom.

In my low ability 9th grade Life Science class, I experimented with different writing assignments to supplement student lab write-ups. Students did some expository writing and then moved on to descriptive writing. There was a lot of variety, but at the end of the year I saw little or no improvement in most of my students' writing or thinking. I needed a manageable, simple, and yet effective method of getting students to reason and communicate more effectively.

My teaching assignment changed, and I found myself working primarily with advanced 11th and 12th grade students. Aha, I thought to myself. Now for some really good stuff like DNA mutations, endrocrinology, physiological adaptations, and brain physiology. I brought in Scientific American reprints on exciting topics for them to read.

They never read them.

Meanwhile, the paperwork was driving me nuts. I would work up questions (in sequential order) for all films and reading assignments. Students would fill in the blanks, other students would copy the blanks, I would grade the blanks, their minds would remain blanks, and they didn't seem to give a blank. Still, I clung to the belief that my goal was indeed worthwhile—I wanted them to be better thinkers.

Enter the Teacher-in-Space Program. I had to propose a project to be carried out in micro-gravity. As a biologist, I was fascinated by the work of Hubel and Weisel and critical developmental time periods in the visual system. How about taking hummingbird eggs into space to check for critical developmental periods in the vestibular (balance) system? Great idea. Next step: Find out what work had already been done with the vestibular system, flight, and birds in space. A computerized search of the literature would surely save time. With birds, flight, space, and balance as major descriptors, I submitted my search request. Ten days later it came back with abstracts of the related articles. The first article to match with the descriptors was entitled "Is There Space in the Boston Gardens for High Flying Larry Bird?" Not quite what I wanted, but I was reintroduced to abstracts.

"I want my students to be better thinkers. But how do I know what they think until I hear them say it?"

The idea of abstracts gave me an idea, which I shared with another teacher, Phyllis, the next day.

"I want my students to be better thinkers. But how do I know what they think until I hear them say it? Even with all the worksheets and variety of writing assignments, they're not becoming better writers. I move on to a new type of assignment before they can improve. What's more, I'm the one who's doing all the work.

"I'm tired of preparing worksheets and then digging them up for absent or slovenly students. I'm tired of the model of student as consumer and teacher as producer of information. I'm tired of students disregarding articles that I think they should know about, and . . . I'm tired of their thinking in phrases."

Now I <u>really</u> felt tired and what's more, ready for a couch and psychoanalysis. Phyllis smiled. "So what's your idea?"

"Abstracts."

"Abstracts?"

Abstracts—the scientists' answer to information overload. Abstracts are a no-nonsense, objective, concise summary. They mention the range of topics, any names of significant researchers, and the conclusions of the author. If I have students abstract reading assignments, films, and the talks of guest speakers, they will improve their writing skills, be able to distinguish fact from fiction, concentrate on the crux of the information, be producers of knowledge, and engage in a portion of real science. I think that if I teach them to do abstracts, and we practice writing them throughout the year, they can learn to be successful writers."

. . . . . .

It all seemed so simple. It was and is. Abstracting has proven to be very successful, both with advanced and low ability students. I vary the assignments in content and length to match the ability of the students, but they all learn to abstract.

In my low ability 9th grade Life Science course, students typically write a one-paragraph abstract of a film shown in class. I provide the topic sentence of the paragraph for the first several abstracts of the year. When the abstracts are returned, I use one of the better examples to make an overhead transparency as a model. Below is an example of what I consider to be a good 9th grade abstract:

> The film "Seed Dispersal" showed the process for getting seeds spread. Without man, some seeds would become extinct. Wind is also a factor that helps in spreading seeds. Pine and fir seeds are two that depend on wind. Hickory nuts are too heavy, so gravity is used. Water carries coconut to its destination. Birds and other animals disperse some seeds. Some plants shoot their seeds into the air for a new beginning. Plants have to spread their seeds, otherwise they would die off.

Here is another more typical example, written by an average "C" student:

> There are many ways seeds can be dispersed by man, by wind, by water and by shooting out there seeds. Man picks up seeds and replants them, the wind picks up loose seeds and carry them away. Animals carry them on fur and threw digestive system.

With practice, students get very good—and fast—at writing abstracts. I have students write about 25 abstracts a year. They are given 5-10 minutes at the end of a film to write them and turn them in. I had to sell students on the importance of writing at the beginning of the year to get my reluctant students to attempt writing abstracts. Now, if I give students time in class, I will get a 90-95% turn-in rate. Some are barely readable, but it is a beginning, and they do improve. Good writing is teachable.

In upper division advanced classes, the writing assignments are typically 3-5 paragraphs in length. The formula I use is Abstract, Content, and Response (**ACR**). The source for these writing assignments is typically scientific journal articles. Paragraph one is an abstract of the article, paragraphs two and three summarize the content of the article, and the last paragraph discusses applications and/or their response to the topic.

"Abstracting articles and films has been a successful way to encourage my students to think, and it is a manageable way to improve student writing skills. It takes about the same amount of time to correct a paragraph as it does to correct a worksheet, but the benefits to students are much greater."

An article from the February 1983 *The American Biology Teacher*, "Biology of Skin Color," serves as a good example of format. First, I list the following outline on the board (in this case, a three-paragraph format):

Paragraph 1: Abstract
Paragraph 2: Content
1. What is the biological function of melanin?
2. Why do melanin granules collect around the nucleus?
3. What appears to be the relationship between skin color and latitude?
4. What relationship is there between skin, sun, and vitamin D?

Paragraph 3: Response
Topic sentence: "There are several applications to be derived from this research in the medical and social realms."

1. How might the health of Native Americans in the Arctic be affected by the "modernization" of relying less on fish as a primary source of protein?
2. How might information in this article be useful to Blacks in South Africa?

The hardest part of the assignment for students is the response paragraph. A short class discussion usually is needed to brainstorm ideas. This is important; it fills them in on world events and serves as a prewriting exercise.

Abstracting articles and films has been a successful way to encourage my students to think, and it is a manageable way to improve student writing skills. It takes about the same amount of time to correct a paragraph as it does to correct a worksheet, but the benefits to students are much greater. If a student wants extra credit for watching a science-related television program or reading a scientific article, they abstract the program using the ACR guidelines.

Abstracts are one of three primary types of written assignments I now use. Written lab reports are still regularly required as a means of teaching critical thinking and the scientific method, and once or twice a semester I do a Problem Series, adapted from the Future Problem Solving Bowl format. Writing assignments get students into all the levels of Blooms's taxonomy. Some students complain about writing early in the year, but as they improve in their writing, seldom are complaints heard.

Perhaps best of all, I hear comments like this from former students:

"Hey, Mr. B., what's that story about Larry Bird again? And oh. . . by the way, thanks for helping me to write better." ■

[Steve Boyarsky is a science teacher at North Medford High School and one of two Oregon Teacher in Space candidates.]

Looking at stars
Is like looking at
A crumbled cookie on a black table.
Looking at a black hole
Is like looking at
A tunnel before you go in.

-- Robert, rm. 18

GALAXIES

G leaming with stars
A nd burning with nebulae,
L earning to teach the new stars
A nd learning to fly.
X ing, says the sign to Pluto.
I ntern martians strike back.
E verybody knows that
S ome martians are jealous.

-- Carla, rm. 21

SPACE CHEER

Space is a place
where meteors race
in a lot of empty space.

Give me an "S," give me a "P,"
Give me an "A" and a "C" and "E."
And what does that spell?
Space! Space!
What would we do without space?
We would be no place.

-- Lisa, rm. 17

Writing with the Turtle

Judy Bachman

Yes, creative writing is greatly enhanced with the use of **LogoWriter**. But in large classes, and with younger children, too often the product is a picture drawn with the turtle, embellished with "stamped" costumes and text describing the picture.

LogoWriter gives the opportunity for a much different visual display of children's creative ideas, allowing the text and animated graphics to unfold sequentially and rhythmically on the computer screen. But how can we inspire students to produce such work, especially with large classes and limited assistance in a lab setting?

In the Ladue, MO, school district, students have been working with Logo since the first grade. **LogoWriter** was introduced to these experienced third and fourth grade Logo programmers this fall. They soon became infatuated with the text that could be added to the adventure of the turtle and sprite. When projects such as poems or stories were introduced and then programmed, however, the product was very similar to what could have been produced on paper—a picture appeared and then the words (or vice versa).

Were our expectations too high for this age group? Was it possible for them to make their text and graphics more interactive? Could we promote this idea and still encourage individual creativity; that is, could some modeling be done with large groups of children without ending up with carbon copies of the same story?

We decided to give it a try. We selected a story familiar to the entire class and then modeled the putting together of the pieces to make the beginning of an interactive story. From there it was decided that individual teachers would branch out with projects of their own.

Step 1: Costume Design

Ideally, we wanted to create an original group story to program. Because of a lack of time, however, we decided to use *The Three Little Pigs*. To make the character bigger than the small grid provided by **LogoWriter**, two grids were used, one for the head and one for the body—to really get some action! Here are the "parts" of some of the costume designs:

Step 2: Programming Head and Tail

Programming two turtles to act as one pig was a difficult concept for some children. The analogy we gave was that of dressing up as a horse for Halloween, where one person wears the head of the horse and one person wears the tail portion of the costume, but they will both move as one horse.

The students were not reminded of the fact that these were no longer "drawing turtles" and that they would need to put PENUP. Many children discovered this bug later when they programmed their pig to move. Already very familiar with the Cartesian coordinates, the students had little difficulty in setting the positions to put the head and body together.

Here is a sample procedure worked out by partners:

```
TO PIG
   tell 0
   setsh 1 (head)
   pu
   setpos [ 0 0 ] (coordinates for the
                   middle of the screen)
   tell 1
   setsh 2 (body)
   st
   pu
   setpos [ 0 -20] (coordinates to move
                    the body to the head)
END
```

Step 3: Programming Text

Now that the pig was programmed to appear on command, the next step was to introduce this character with text. This was not difficult to do. In the modeling process the text was kept very simple to keep demonstration time to a minimum. Students were encouraged to elaborate when programming their own story, however.

```
TO WORDS1
   print [\\\\\ Once upon a time there
        was a little pig.]
   (backslashes allow for indenting 5 spaces)
END
```

```
TO WORDS2
   print [ He wanted to build a house of
         bricks. He set out to find some. ]
END
```

Step 4: Putting Text and Graphics Together

Now it was a simple matter of nesting the two procedures together to start the action.

```
TO STORY
   words1
   pig
   words2
END
```

Step 5: Starting the Action

At this point a procedure for making the pig move was demonstrated but not shown to the students. Of course they asked "How did you do that?" They were reminded to compare their turtles dressed up in pig costumes with the costumed horse. After playing with this idea, the solutions were shared at the end of the period.

Sample solution:

```
TO MOVE
   Tell [0 1]
   seth 90 (heads the pig in one direction)
   repeat 20 [ fd 2 ]
   wait 20
   seth 270 (heads the pig in the opposite
         direction)
   repeat 20 [ fd 2]
END
```

Step 6: Further Nesting

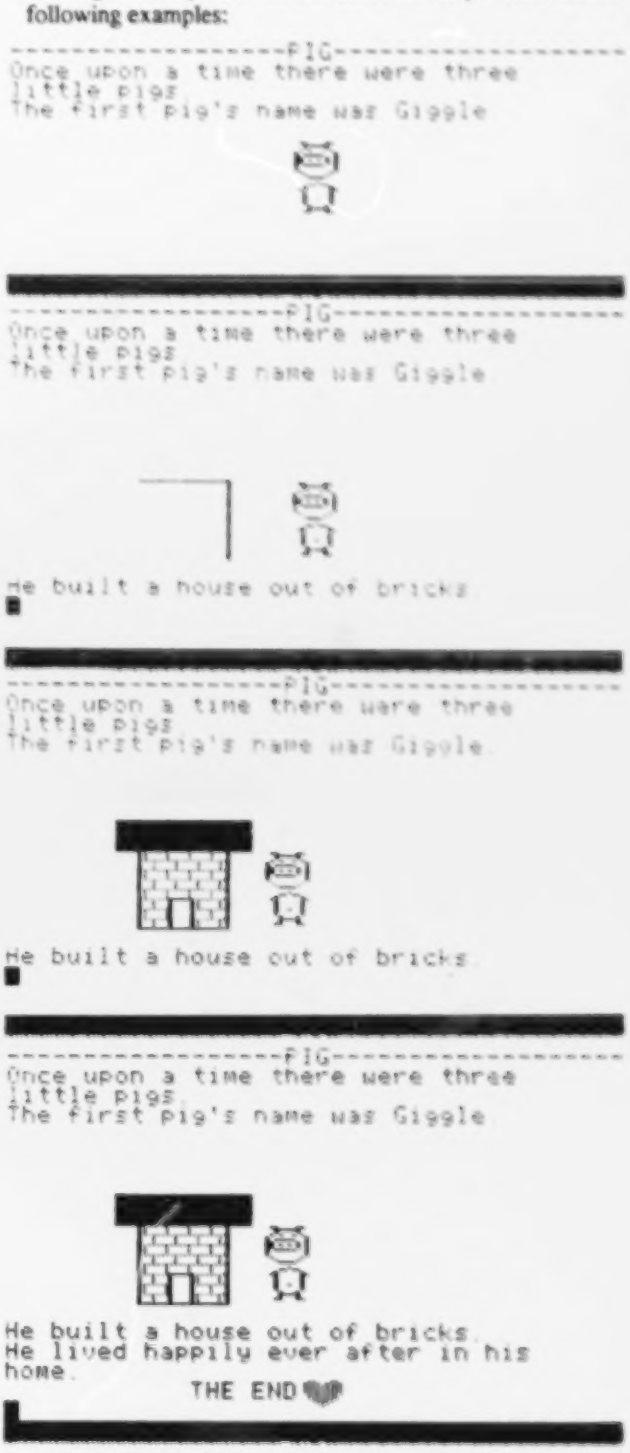
The MOVE procedure was then nested inside of the "super" procedure.

```
TO STORY
   words1
   pig
   words2
   move
END
```

The partners were then challenged to write the next part of the story and then program the action such as building the house of bricks.

Step 7: Pig Stories

The fruits of this endeavor were delightful and varied stories. Our fears of children churning out carbon copies of the original story were unfounded. See for yourself in the following examples:

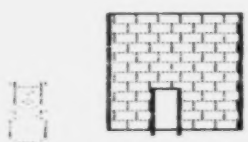

PIG
Once upon a time there were three little pigs.
The first pig's name was Giggle
He built a house out of bricks.
He built a house out of bricks.
He lived happily ever after in his home.
THE END

Series of 4 by Ira and Andrew C., grade 3

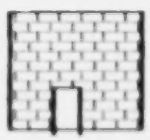
Unfortunately, this "dead" text does not allow the reader to fully appreciate the colorful and active unfolding of the text and graphics. The enchantment of watching the pig move as if to build each wall of the house is not fully realized unless watching the story progress on the computer screen. The reader also misses the "throbbing" of the heart at the end of the story signaling THE END.

```
------------------PIG-------------------
Once upon a time...
there was a FAT pig.
With a TV set body.
He built a brick house.
```

```
------------------PIG-------------------
Once upon a time...
there was a FAT pig.
With a TV set body.
He built a brick house.
All he did there was,
watch TV and eat.
THE END
```



```
------------------PIG-------------------
Once upon a time...
there was a FAT pig.
With a TV set body.
He built a brick house.
All he did there was,
watch TV and eat.
THE END
                          Bye!
```



In this story the pig builds his house and then disappears inside to lead his life of decadence!

Series of 3 by Andrew G. and Ben R., grade 3

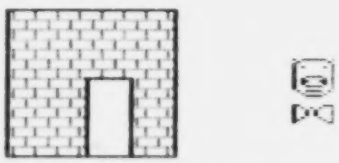
Here are two final examples:

```
------------------PIG-------------------
There once was a little pig.
He was a very happy pig.
Life was very simple for this pig.
```

```
So then he built a house out of bricks.
He kept warm in the winter and lived
happily ever after.
```

Eric and Julie, grade 4

```
------------------PIGGY-----------------
    Once upon a time there lived a pig
named Piglety.
    He built himself a house made out
of bricks.
```



```
    He played all day and lived happily
ever after.
                The End
```

Courtney, grade 4

Step 8: ??

Classroom teachers were as delighted with the stories and the idea of interactive text and graphics as the children. Many other classroom projects of a more sophisticated nature incubated in teachers' minds as their students programmed furiously. This "pig" project is the tool that students will use to hatch these other projects. The most gratifying outcome of this project is the enthusiasm with which every student approaches the next task.

Some of the projects being planned include:

- Scenes from Greek mythology
- Color poems
- Haiku
- Reports on Thomas Jefferson
- **The Midnight Ride of Paul Revere**
- Explorer reports

Judy Bachman, 7926 Gannon, St. Louis, MO 63130. ■

Practical Writing Ideas

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Journal Writing Across the Curriculum

Margaret (Peg) Serences

During the first UCI Writing Project in the summer of 1979, using journal writing in the classroom was discussed and demonstrated. Speakers stressed that the goal of using this writing approach was fluency. I was intrigued because I am always anxious to find new ways to encourage students to write. Of the varying forms then mentioned—e.g., diary entry, autobiographical sketch, creative writing exercises, learning aid, and idea collecting—I chose to incorporate the creative writing journal format in my seventh and eighth grade curricula. For three days a week, students were asked to write for ten to fifteen minutes on a topic, which was generally teacher-selected. I found this type of journal writing especially productive when I imposed a time limit, and it provided a prewriting stimulus to get my students writing.

In the English classroom I had students keep their journal entries in a special writing folder. After the writing folder contained several writing samples, the students selected one of their favorites to rewrite and develop into a short composition. Working in groups of four (students were allowed to form their own groups), each student would then read the rewritten composition aloud to the other members of the group. I stressed the importance of "hearing" their own words; this proved an excellent tool for catching sentence fragments and run-on sentences. Next, each student graded each of the four compositions, using the response guide that I provided. Finally, I graded all the papers myself, giving a grade for the compositions and a separate grade for the student's ability to grade someone else's work.

Since I had such good results with journal writing in my classes, I began to wonder how this writing approach would work in other disciplines. As chairperson of the English Department, I encouraged teachers in mathematics, music, physical education, science, and social studies to try weekly or biweekly journal writing projects. I stressed that students could write to discover what they had learned about a subject and that teachers could use their students' journals as a way of determining how effectively they were teaching. Several teachers volunteered to initiate journal writing to see whether it would be a useful learning tool.

Here are some student writing samples from other curricular areas:

Physical education: Why I like baseball best of all!
I like baseball because . . . it's fun to *try* to hit the little ball and run around the bases. It's exciting to throw the ball to another player to get the runner out. Baseball is a game of skill. It takes lots of practice to be good. You have to have a good coach too. When you're in a league, you can meet people and make friends, learn things, and have fun. Also, if you have a good team, you can win a trophy. When the season is over, you get to keep the hats and the friends too.
That is why I like baseball.

Music: Compare three selections of music.
After listening to the three pieces of music, I've decided that they all have a beat of some kind. First let me define beat—pulse. But after listening to the third piece, "Sounds," it seems to be different from the others because the first two seemed to use more instruments that flowed into a steady rhythm. They also had a more defined melody and harmony, so it blended together to create music.

Science: What did you learn from dissecting a frog?

Purpose: Mrs. "B" told us to, so we could learn more about the internal parts of a frog.

Observation: On the frog I cut open, I noticed that the skin is almost like rubber. When we cut open the frog, we saw a layer of muscles, which was gross looking. Then we cut that apart and saw a bunch of yellow intestine-looking things. Mrs. "B" told us it was where she produces the eggs, so we had a girl. Her insides are very clear to see. It was a good study.

Conclusion: I think the frog's insides are clear, easy to observe, and neat.

Drama: How do you express emotions on stage?
I make my emotions on stage by thinking I am really that person. I try to really get into it. I remember how people in real life would act. Before I get on stage, I have to make my emotions first. I try not to be me acting like someone else. I try to be them.

Social studies: What was life like in the Colonies?
Life in the Colonies was pretty good because it was easier to get land here, and in Europe it was hard. It was bad for the slaves because they were bought and sold. It turned gloomy in 1763 because England was in debt in the war, and so they started taxing the Colonies. Then

the Colonies got mad at England and the Revolutionary War started, and the Colonies won the war.

With the insights gained from journal writing, several teachers, especially in the area of social studies, began to integrate writing in their respective subject areas. I also noticed the use of essay questions as a replacement for the standard multiple-choice examination. It seems to me that the journal writing assigned in other disciplines reinforced and, therefore, strengthened our English program. At the same time, it enabled students to explore what they thought about a given topic in a way that could never be expressed in a fill-in-the-blank or true-false examination. ■

Margaret Serences is English Department Chairperson, Niguel Hills Junior High School, Capistrano Unified School District; and Teacher/Consultant, UCI Writing Project.

Mailbags and Miscellany: Writing in History Classes

Laurel Corona

Most young people enjoy writing when the assignments are enjoyable and when they allow them to use their imaginations, their senses of humor, and their growing sensitivity to the life situations of others. The following two class activities promote this kind of pleasure in writing and allow for creative expression outside the English classroom: mailbags from historical sites and miscellany.

Mailbags from Historical Sites

Mailbags from Historical Sites is a class project, but each student is completely responsible for his or her own part of the mail in the bag and for helping create a mailbag as it might have been filled when it left an important historical site. The mail in the bag should represent the writings of as full a range of people in the community as possible, and the destinations of the letters should be as diverse as possible. The purpose of the assignment is to enable the students to sense the ambiance of another place and time and to feel the past as if they were living in it.

In preparation for creating the mailbag, the students should make a list of the people apt to be in a particular place at a particular time. For example, in a Gold Rush town one might find miners, dance hall girls, preachers and their wives, stable boys, horse thieves, cowboys, teachers, doctors, merchants, and so on. Each of these would be living a different life in this town and have a different attitude about being there. For the most part, they would not care about or even be aware of being a part of history. They would be concerned primarily with their daily lives. Each of these people would have different reasons for sending mail.

After developing a large list of people in a Gold Rush town and discussing how each might view life there, the students should then project what kinds of letters each might write and to whom. For instance, a preacher's wife might be miserable and write to tell her mother so. The preacher might be inquiring about inexpensive *Bibles*. A horse thief about to be hung might write to bid farewell to his true love. After this part of the project is thoroughly brainstormed, the students should pick which character interests them the most and then write a letter for the bag. The teacher should encourage the students to adopt a writing style, tone, and point of view appropriate to the character they are writing through.

Some creative student might make a bag at home, or one could be fashioned from a paper sack. The most likely way to display the completed project would be to create a montage in the classroom, perhaps with colored string connecting each letter to the bag. Wall space and grade level would, of course, dictate how such a project would be "published."

Miscellany

Miscellany is a class project that is similar to the one featuring mailbags, but more of the work should be done in small groups. Rather than create the finished products that letters represent, in the miscellany activity the students create the debris of an important historical event. For instance, they might imagine what General Ulysses S. Grant's tent looked like after the deciding battle of the Civil War or what his quarters at Appomattox looked like several days later. As a way of comparing and contrasting the two sides in the war, the class might be divided into a group responsible for creating the miscellany of the Union general's side and a group responsible for the Confederate general's miscellany. Miscellany might consist of battle plans, discarded communiques, drafts of speeches, letters to and from home or the President, and so forth. In order to create good, verisimilar debris, the students would have to research the subject thoroughly. Because of this, a project of this sort, if expectations are clearly delineated, makes an excellent alternative to a term paper.

Both of the projects described above can be suited to different grade levels and ability levels and also to different subject matter. Although history students would probably benefit most from such activities, teachers of other subjects might also be able to adapt these ideas for their classes. For example, if a science class is learning about Louis Pasteur, or Pierre and Marie Curie, or Galileo, or if an art class is studying Vincent van Gogh, or Michelangelo Buonarroti, or Pablo Picasso, the miscellany project might be adapted. Similarly, students of Spanish or any other foreign language might create a town and its inhabitants and create a mailbag from that town.

And, teachers, do not let your students have all the fun. Indulge your own fantasies about dance hall girls or cattle rustlers. Willingness to do your own assignments is the single best way to validate them in your students' eyes. ■

Laurel Corona is Director of OASIS, University of California, San Diego.

Data Bases 'R Us

Stephen Marcus

My first work with computer-assisted writing, back in the early days, involved developing a program that helped students study and write poetry. I quickly learned to keep quiet about my work when talking with some people. They had a hard time accepting the notion that technology could be integrated into that particular curriculum. For many, it constituted "unnatural practices...unspeakable acts."

Times have changed. Now people routinely see computers as a "natural" resource for English teachers. Word processing remains the crucial technological tool for enriching the language arts curriculum, for providing students with new powers and incentives. And it's no wonder. Arthur C. Clarke has noted that "any sufficiently advanced technology is indistinguishable from magic." Word processing, which allows students' words to be written in light instead of carved in stone, has worked its subtle but profound magic on many of us, changing our views of what writing entails, of what we can do as writers, and even who we are as writers.

There are other kinds of software now having a major impact on the English/language arts curriculum. Telecommunications, graphics, and interactive adventure writing software are all a part of any comprehensive integration of technology into the curriculum. Still another tool is data base software, something I myself had virtually no experience with at the time I was asked to develop some language arts applications for a popular data base program (Scholastic's **PFS:File**).

What I eventually discovered was that a data base provides a means of organizing, storing, and retrieving information. Your wallet is a data base. So is a dictionary. So is a novel. Each of these provides a way to organize, store, and retrieve information, whether the information is about you, about your language, or about an author's insights on life.

A computerized data base has its own special qualities, of course. If a word processing program can be thought of as a fancy typewriter, a data base program can be thought of as a fancy 3x5 card filing system. (Both these comparisons obscure as much as they reveal, but they do help make the strange familiar.)

Here's the basic data base jargon. Think in terms of creating a form (as in "fill out this form"). The terms are: **FIELD, PAGE, FORM, FILE, RECORD.** Figure 1 illustrates how these terms are used.

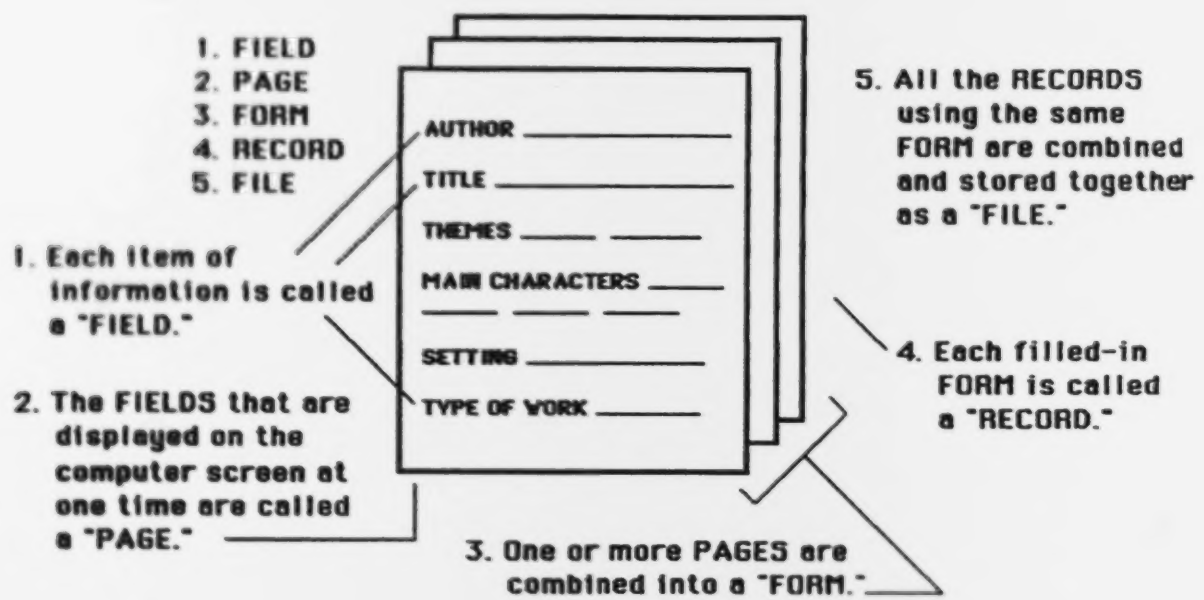

1. FIELD
2. PAGE
3. FORM
4. RECORD
5. FILE
AUTHOR
TITLE
THEMES
MAIN CHARACTERS
SETTING
TYPE OF WORK
1. Each item of information is called a "FIELD."
2. The FIELDS that are displayed on the computer screen at one time are called a "PAGE."
3. One or more PAGES are combined into a "FORM."
4. Each filled-in FORM is called a "RECORD."
5. All the RECORDS using the same FORM are combined and stored together as a "FILE."

Figure 1

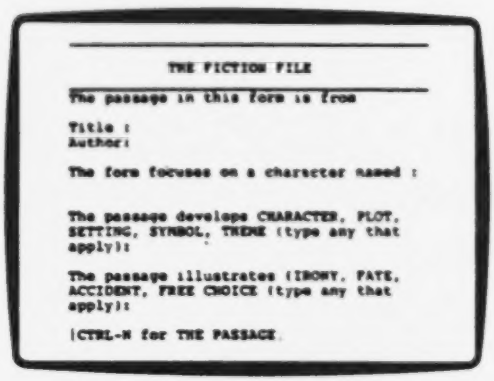
That's basically it. There are other important things to learn, of course, but once you've gotten the terms down pat, you've made significant progress along the learning curve.

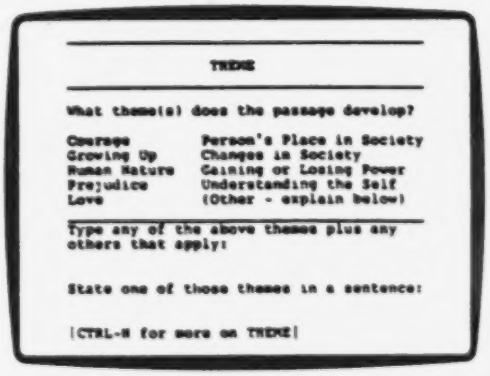
There are large data bases that are stored in central computers and are available to people with the right hardware, software, account number, and password. There are also disk-based data bases that are more under your control, ones you and your students can custom design and use whenever you want. In the latter case, what you do is figure out what kind of information in what area of knowledge you want to organize and store. You use a data base program (e.g., **PFS:File** or **Bank Street Filer**, the data base portion of **AppleWorks**) to design a computerized form that can be filled with the information you want.

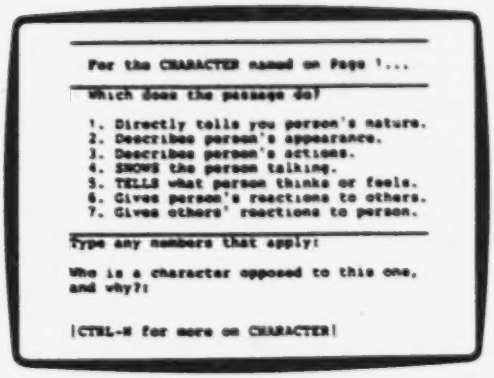
The more ingenious your form, the more filled in it gets; and the more forms you fill in, the more you can "interrogate" the data base. That is, you can ask it questions and get answers that will be more or less interesting, depending on the nature of your questions and the basic structure of the form.

There is a growing availability of data bases for English and language arts. For example, in collaboration with Beverly Hunter, I created three data base curriculum units (**Literature and Composition Data Bases for Scholastic's PFS:File**, Scholastic, Inc., 1986). The one package contains AESOP, FICTION, and PAPERS. The AESOP file is based on Aesop's Fables (and includes 75 of them). FICTION is designed for studying any novel or short story. PAPERS is for students to record information about writing done in class. The discussion of FICTION, below, should give some idea of how data base software can be used to help students develop critical thinking and writing skills in English classes.

The FICTION form can be applied to any number of works, but to give students material to work with, FICTION comes supplied with 70 passages from two novels (*The Red Badge of Courage* and *Lord of the Flies*) and one short story ("The Lottery"). Each passage is contained on its own form, along with other information such as whether the passage develops a theme or helps reveal character. There's information about how the passage does this and about what people think about the passage. Some of the screen pages from the FICTION file are shown below:


THE FICTION FILE
The passage in this form is from
Title :
Author:
The form focuses on a character named :
The passage develops CHARACTER, PLOT, SETTING, SYMBOL, THEME (type any that apply)::
The passage illustrates (IRONY, FATE, ACCIDENT, FREE CHOICE (type any that apply)::
|CTRL-H for THE PASSAGE




For the CHARACTER named on Page 1...
Which does the passage do?
1. Directly tells you person's nature.
2. Describes person's appearance.
3. Describes person's actions.
4. SHOWS the person talking.
5. TELLS what person thinks or feels.
6. Gives person's reactions to others.
7. Gives others' reactions to person.
Type any numbers that apply:
Who is a character opposed to this one, and why?:
|CTRL-H for more on CHARACTER|

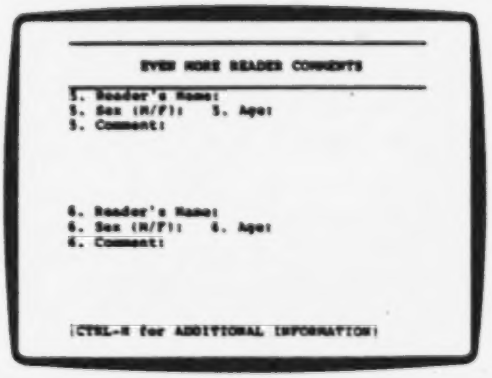


Figure 2

It's important to emphasize that while numerous forms contain filled-in fields (to serve as examples and working material), the real point of the FICTION file is to give your *students* the chance to read, think, discuss, and write about literature and to add their ideas to the FICTION data base. The Teacher's Guide contains activities to help students learn to use the data base program and to explore the nature of fiction in general and FICTION in particular. You and your students can fill in the forms (and add new ones) with passages and information about the same or different literary works.

As students add their responses to the FICTION file, the data base becomes richer. They can then use it to help answer questions like these:

- I'm writing a paper on the theme of "courage." Is courage in this story based more on what characters do or on what they feel?
- What part do rituals play in characters' lives?
- How does a character develop an understanding of himself or herself?
- Is there a difference between what boys in this class think about courage and what girls think?

Part of the educational goal with this material is to help students learn how to frame productive questions and to think about what kinds of information will help them answer their questions. As readers of literature, they're encouraged to pay careful attention to the text they're studying. As writers, "publishing" their thoughts and insights in the data base, they're provided with a tool to help themselves get "raw material" for class discussions and writing assignments.

It's also important to note that FICTION rarely supplies the actual answers to the questions. Instead, the students must apply such thinking skills as identifying and organizing information to solve a problem. They must also synthesize and evaluate that information in order to apply it to the particular writing assignments they're working on.

As noted, FICTION can be used with any novel or short story. Using the data base program itself (**PFS:File**), you and your students can redesign the form's structure to reflect other interests in the literature. You can also create a different version to use with drama or poetry. Your class could even prepare special collections of passages and comments on topics chosen by the students such as "Growing Up," "Leaving Home," or "Succeeding in Life."

Creating, enlarging, and maintaining a data base is a challenging and rewarding task. Many people, in fact, succumb to what is known as "data base fascination." The experience is like browsing through an electronic book shop. You can peek into other worlds and other people's responses to those worlds.

Every data base program has its own special strengths. **PFS:File**, for example, allows relatively large passages of text to be stored. Whatever program you use, you'll find that data base applications provide intriguing new opportunities for integrating technology into the English/language arts curriculum. Students can develop important research skills, become more computer literate, and enrich their study of literature. ■

NOTES

1. Here are some of the published data bases for the English/language arts curriculum.

- **Literature and Composition Data Bases** for Scholastic's **PFS:File**, Scholastic, Inc., 730 Broadway, New York, NY 10003.
- **Poetry and Mythology Data Bases** for Scholastic's **PFS:File**, Scholastic, Inc.

There are numerous other data bases for science, history, and social science classes published by companies such as Scholastic, Inc., and Sunburst Communications, 39 Washington Ave., Pleasantville, NY 10570. Language arts teachers should have little trouble integrating reading and writing skills development into this material.

2. The thematic elements are drawn from the Model Curriculum Standards for English/Language Arts, California State Department of Education, 1985.

3. Portions of the article above are taken from the Teacher's Guide for **Literature and Composition Activities** for Scholastic's **PFS:File**, by Marcus and Hunter, New York: Scholastic, Inc., 1986 and are reprinted by permission.

Connecting Literature with Writing at the Intermediate and Secondary Level

Karen Jostad

Imitation is often a very good method for learning. Writers read other writers, not just for content, but for style and structure. In Shakespeare's time, students actually copied word for word the writings of successful authors with the hope that they would acquire skills in this manner. As teachers we can sometimes detect traits of an author's style in our students' writing after they have read stories or poems by that author. Rather than impeding the development of a student's own narrative voice, this kind of imitation actually helps their development as writers.

Word processing provides a wonderfully flexible medium for writing lessons designed to teach through imitation and modeling. As an author of intermediate and secondary level word processing writing activities for the **Write On!** library, I've rediscovered this instructional strategy by using excerpted material from authors students are reading. These passages are put on a word processor data diskette (the **Write On!** data diskette) along with student activities that involve the student with the author's language, structure, and style. If students are working with an author's use of metaphor, point of view, or descriptive language, they are given structured activities to teach that objective, and then they are asked to apply what they have learned in an open-ended creative writing activity. Thus, students achieve specific writing objectives while using authors as models for their own writing.

This is a strategy you can apply yourself. The following six activities, taken from the **Write On!** library, illustrate some effective ways to use excerpted material. You may be able to adapt these ideas to material of your own choice, and you may think of other ways to use this strategy. If so, I would like to hear from you!

1. Using Descriptive Language

Students are directed to read the passage from *A Wrinkle in Time* by Madeleine L'Engle describing Meg's first encounter with the IT.

> "As she continued to step slowly forward, at last she realized what the Thing on the dais was.
>
> IT was a brain.
>
> A disembodied brain. An oversized brain, just enough larger than normal to be completely revolting and terrifying. A living brain. A brain that pulsed and quivered, that seized and commanded. No wonder the brain was called IT. IT was the most horrible, the most repellent thing she had ever seen, far more nauseating than anything she had ever imagined with her conscious mind, or that had ever tormented her in her most terrible nightmares."

"As teachers we can sometimes detect traits of an author's style in our students' writing after they have read stories or poems by that author. Rather than impeding the development of a student's own narrative voice, this kind of imitation actually helps their development as writers."

After reading the passage, students are to type in a description of how it made them feel. The next step on the activity file is to change the descriptive language in the passage to alter the feeling created in the original passage. First they try to eliminate the effectiveness of the passage by deleting descriptive language so the IT instead becomes appealing, friendly, beautiful. Finally, students are given a word bank of descriptive terms used by L'Engle and asked to write their own paragraph describing something repulsive to them. By approaching the same passage from several different angles, students have lots of opportunity to play with the language and structures used by L'Engle to create this beautifully written description. Thus, when they write their own passage, we would hope to see some modeling of L'Engle's style.

(from *Observe and Describe*, Humanities Software # I-243)

2. Combining Sentences

Sentence combining activities can be constructed from material students are reading. The passage that follows was

rewritten from *The Other Side of the Mountain* by Jean George. Students are instructed to tighten up the language by following these steps:

1. Combine sentences.
2. Eliminate unnecessary words.
3. Get rid of repeated thoughts.

> I had made my hemlock bed right in the stream valley. It was in a place where the wind drained down from the mountaintop. The mountaintop was cold and so the wind was cold. It might have been all right if I had made it on the other side of the boulder. But I made it on the wrong side of the boulder. I was right on the main highway of the cold winds. These cold winds tore down upon the valley below. I didn't have enough hemlock boughs under me. My stomach was cold and damp even before I lay my head down. I took some boughs off the roof and stuffed them under me. After putting the boughs under me my shoulders were cold. I curled up in a ball. I was almost asleep. Then a whippoorwill call awakened me. If you have ever been within forty feet of a whippoorwill, you will understand. It was so loud I couldn't even shut my eyes. They are deafening!

Students then are given George's original passage to compare with their own and are asked to continue to revise and edit if there are additional changes they want to make. Always, students are directed to treat the original author's material, not as an answer key, but as a reference.

(from *Paragraphs 7*, Humanities Software # I-214)

3. Using Helping Verbs

Helping verbs are overused by professional as well as student writers. By selecting existing text and or modifying passages, students can revise and edit for helping verbs. In the following modified section of text from *The Door in the Wall* by Marguerite de Angeli, students find and replace helping verbs such as IS, ARE, WAS, and WERE with more colorful, descriptive language.

> For the most part the road was low among the hills. It was winding in and out, following the river. A heavy mist was over the valley so thick it was like a white blanket which parted only enough for the next step to be seen, then closed in again. When wayfarers were met, it was as if they had appeared by magic, out of nowhere. Once, where the road was narrow, there was a group of peasants who suddenly came out of the mist and stopped to ask their way. Their speech was very strange to Robin, but John-go-in-the-Wynd seemed to know what they said, for he directed them in the same strange tongue.

The original passage is provided for student comparison. By referencing the original passage, students often find additional ways to improve their own version—or they may find some things they like better about their passage!

(from *You Are the Editor!*, Humanities Software # I-225)

4. Point of View

Practice in using first and third person point of view is easily created by selecting passages, typing them on a word processor file, and having students revise/rewrite so the passage reads from the other point of view. For example, the following excerpt from *Island of the Blue Dolphin* by Scott O'Dell is written in first person.

Students are directed to rewrite the passage so that it is in third person instead. They assume the point of view of an onlooker describing the events, and to help them in their change of point of view, they are told the name of the girl in the scene is Karana.

> The head rose out of the twisting arms like a giant stalk. The gold eyes with their black rims were fixed on me. Above the sounds of the waves and the water splashing and Rontu's barking, I could hear the snapping of his beak, which was sharper than the knife I held in my hand.
>
> I drove the knife down into his body and as I did this I was suddenly covered, or so it seemed, with a countless number of leeches, sucking at my skin. Fortunately one hand was free, the hand that held the knife, and again and again I struck down through the tough hide. The suckers, which were fastened to me and pained greatly, lessened their hold. Slowly the arms stopped moving and then grew limp.

After completing the activity, students answer questions such as: Why do you think Scott O'Dell chose to write in the first person? What was lost or gained by your third person version of the passage? Which point of view do you prefer and why?

(from *Finding a Writing Style*, Humanities Software # I-242)

5. Developing a Character Sketch

Character sketches can be modeled after existing brief sketches from literature students are reading. A good modeling technique, which provides students with lots of

support and invariably ends in success, is to retain the style, structure, and flow of an existing sketch, and simply change the character and thus the description. The word portrait describing the Fat Man in *The Maltese Falcon* by Dashiell Hammett works well to illustrate this strategy. Mr. Hammett chose language that sounds fat, soft, and flabby. He used almost cartoon-like images of the Fat Man. He also uses simile. Students are directed to read the passage and see if they can find other ways in which Mr. Hammett was able to paint such a good word portrait of his Fat Man character.

After studying the passage, they are give the problem of rewriting the passage to describe the Thin Man. The [ ] marks help them find the sections they need to change. For example, they need to find a hand simile to replace "like a fat pink star" as a description of the Thin Man's hand.

> The [fat] man was [flabbily fat] with [bulbous pink] cheeks and lips and chins and neck, with a [great soft egg of a belly] that was all his torso, and [pendant cones] for arms and legs. As he advanced to meet Spade, all his [bulbs rose and shook and fell separately] with each step, in the manner of [clustered soap-bubbles not yet released from the pipe through which they had been blown]. His eyes, made [small by fat puffs around them], were dark and sleek. Dark ringlets thinly covered his [broad] scalp. He wore a black cutaway coat, black vest, black satin ascot tie holding a pinkish pearl, striped gray worsted trousers, and patent-leather shoes.
>
> His voice was a [throaty purr], "Ah, Mr. Spade," he said with enthusiasm and held out a hand like a [fat pink star].

(from *Character Sketch*, Humanities Software # S-202)

6. Writing Dialogue

Good dialogue is often difficult for students to write. They will overuse the word "said," or else they won't use it enough, favoring words such as cried, laughed, shouted, giggled, etc. until the reader is completely distracted.

Modeling of good dialogue can be accomplished by selecting well written passages and replacing the descriptor of the speaker with a blank. This section of dialogue from *A Wrinkle In Time* by Madeleine L'Engle works well:

> "I hate it!" Charles Wallace _____. "I hate the Dark Thing!"
>
> Mrs. Whatsit nodded. "Yes, Charles dear. We thought it would be too frightening for you to see it first of all about your own, beloved world."
>
> "But what is it?" Calvin _____. "We know that it's evil, but what is it?"
>
> "Yyouu hhave ssaidd itt!" Mrs. Which's voice _____. "Itt iss Eevill. Itt iss thee Ppowers of Ddarrkness!"
>
> "But what's going to happen?" Meg's voice _____. "Oh, please, Mrs. Which, tell us what's going to happen!"
>
> "Wee wwill cconnttinnue tto ffightt!"
>
> Something in Mrs. Which's voice made all three of the children stand straighter, throwing back their shoulders with determination, looking at the glimmer that was Mrs. Which with pride and confidence.

Students are given the unaltered passage to compare with their own. Students read through the text and compare how Madeleine L'Engle used descriptive words to show the speaker's state of mind as he or she was talking.

(from *Finding a Writing Style*, Humanities Software # I-242)

Summary

By combining literary passages for modeling with the flexibility of word processing for practicing, you can explore many ways to help your students improve their writing skills while becoming better acquainted with the techniques of the masters. ■

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DAILY, DAILY! – Read All About It!

Craig Peck

Third grade seems an ideal time to begin work on a newspaper. Start by studying newspapers to determine the kinds of articles and layouts they have. Next, let students decide what articles they want to include in their own newspaper.

After Miss Marken's 3rd grade class had three articles published in the ABC District Multischool Newspaper, interest in newspapers was high. When the class was told that they could publish their own newspaper with everyone's stories in it, they were delighted. They soon had this list of possible departments and subjects: toys, candies, movies, entertainment, cartoons, health and diet, editorial, book reviews, sports, science, social studies, field trips, crossword puzzles, fashions, interesting people and events, and recipes.

Once students were told they could write articles on any of these subjects, they were truly inspired. Everyone wrote an article and almost all the topics were covered. Since these students are at the fluency stage of writing, they won't do much revising. Part of the charm is reading it just the way they wrote it.

The last newspaper of the year might be a combination newspaper/yearbook, or it might be a magazine of the year's highlights, with articles, poems, and stories from previous publications.

These articles will give you a good idea of the range of topics encouraged by newspaper writing!

PARENTS SHOULDN'T DRAG KIDS ALONG

I think it's mean for preants to drag there children out shopping. I mean its no big deal for them to call up a baby sitter. They take us out to get our feet all worn out. They never buy anything for us. We want toys. They buy us shoes, clothes, and get our hair cut and we don't even want our hair cut. It seems like hours and hours before we get out of one store. I mean after one day we are so exhausted we can't even get in our bed. Sometimes I so wore out we can't even get out of bed. Or we might fall asleep in the math test. Thats why I think its mean for preants to take us shopping.

MATT'S HEALTH TIPS

Eat apples, carrots, leats, tomatos, selerea, meats, pateatos. Do not eat or use candy, suger, or salt. Get plenty of exercise walking, juging, or working out in the jim. Do you know that you shouldn't eat s.o.s.? That means salt, oil, and suger.

EDITORIAL

Parents shouldn't force kids to eat disgusting foods. Kids also could throw up eating those foods. I think it is wrong to force food. Food is supposed to build character not to tear it down, and kids shouldn't suffer beacause of food. Food is supposed to be loved not to be hated. Kids eat four food groups that's true, and for example I think mushrooms are not good foods. That's fruits and vegtables group. Just eat apples or celery they all have vitiman C. So what's the diffrence? People shouldn't suffer just beacause of food.

Science Articles

An newspaper can be a perfect opportunity for students to write about science--reports, speakers, field trips, or reviews of science programs on television. Here are two examples--a lovely combination of factual reporting, science, and adventure writing.

PLANET WATCH BY MICHAEL HSIEH

STOWERS-IN NOVEMBER 1986, MISS MARKEN'S CLASS HAD A PLANET WATCH. FIRST WE PLANNED WHAT TO DO DURING THE PLANET WATCH. THEN WE WROTE NOTES TO OUR PARENTS. BEFORE THE PLANET WATCH WE PLAYED. THEN WE DID HOMEWORK. AFTERWORDS, WE ATE CHILI, HOT DOGS, CARROT STICKS, JELLO, AND MILK. THERE WERE CLOUDS BLOCKING THE SKY, AND JUST WHEN WE WERE ABOUT TO GIVE UP THE CLOUDS CLEARED. WE SAW MARS, JUPITER, AND FOUR OF JUPITER'S MOONS THROUGH MR. PECK'S TELESCOPE. I THOUGHT IT WAS FUN.

WHALE WATCH

BY MATTHEW BALKUS

ON A VERY WINDY, AND BRIGHT TUESDAY, WE WENT ON OUR WHALE WATCH. WE WERE ALL EXCITED, AND WE WERE ALL WAITING FOR A FUN TIME, THEN THE CLOUDS ROLLED OVER AND ALL OF OUR HOPE WAS SET BACK. WE WERE ALL AFRAID OF RAIN, SINCE NONE OF US HAD RAIN COATS. WE LEFT THE DOCK VERY SLOWLY, AND WE WERE ALL OVER THE SIDE OF THE BOAT, AND LOOKING AT THE WATER WITH NO REFLECTION. THEN WE CAME UP TO OUR FIRST BUOY WITH TWO SEA LIONS ON IT AND THEN WE WERE OUT TO SEA. IT WAS QUIET AND SLOW MOVING WHEN WE SPOTTED A WHALE!!!! EVERYONE WAS QUIET AND TAKING PICTURES. THE WHALE CAME UP AND ALL WE HEARD WAS THE CLICKING OF ALL THE CAMERAS. HE WENT DOWN, AND CAME BACK UP THREE OR FOUR MORE TIMES, WHEN THE FIFTH TIME HE CAME BACK UP, HE BLEW SOME WATER, AND THEN HIS TAIL CAME UP, AND WAS GONE. THEN SOMEONE SAID, COME TO THE BACK OF THE BOAT; AND THERE WERE DOLPHINS, JUMPING THROUGH THE WAVES. THE BOAT HAD BEEN MAKING. THEN WE SPOTTED ANOTHER WHALE, ON ITS THIRD TIME UP TO THE SURFACE, WHEN IT WENT UNDER THE BOAT, AND SHOOK THE BOAT WILDLY. PEOPLE WERE FALLING DOWN, AND ALMOST FALLING OVER BOARD. THE WHALE FINALLY WENT UNDER THE WATER. THEN WE WENT BACK TO THE DOCK AND WENT HOME. WE ALL HAD A GREAT TIME!!!!

Social Studies

Mrs. Logan's 5th grade class wrote poetry as part of their unit on explorers.

Note the extremely legible **Newsroom** type in these acrostic poems. In some cases you may want to use **Newsroom** or **Print Shop** for the headlines and use a word processor for the articles. Then do some pasteup. You can get clip art from either program, although small student illustrations often have greater charm.

MAGELLAN

By Haeyoun Park

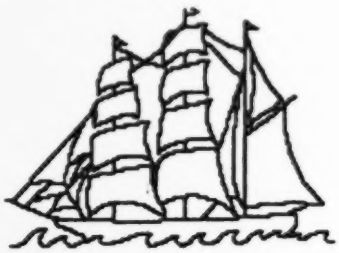
Many of his sailors died
Ate shoes, leather, rats, and sawdust when they ran out of food
Greatest sailor in history
Ehausted and ill his sailors got after they sailed back to Spain
Like others, was looking for a new water route to the Indies
Luckily did not get killed by his sailors
Africa is where his sailors set out for after Magellan had died
Named the South Sea the Pacific Ocean, meaning peaceful

DE SOTO

By Wendy Chan

Discovered the Mississippi
Explored part of the United States

Searched for gold
Out on sea for many days or months
The one who went to find gold in Florida
One of the Spanish explorers



BALBOA

By Jimmy Page

Brave
And looking for gold
Leading and expedition
Bold
On board ship
Also looking for a shorter passage to the Indies

MAGELLAN

By Scott Agresti

Miracle journey
A passage was found through S. America
Getting through the strait was hard
Eating was tough, there wasn't much food
Leather and rats were being eaten
Last they landed on Guam Island
A bunch of islanders killed Magellan
New people were amazed by Magellan

Summary

One of the nicest things about publishing newspapers, newsletters, and magazines is that students pursue their individual and group interests. It keeps students writing, planning, designing, thinking, rewriting, and reading for many, many hours. ■

WRITING ON THE COLLEGE CAMPUS

Anne Auten

Current research in composition reveals that teaching writing as a process rather than a product develops students' writing skills more effectively. The majority of this research, beginning with a benchmark study on the composing processes of twelfth graders (Emig, 1971), has been supported by colleges and universities. We who are intrigued by the use of word processing in the writing classroom have much to gain from the body of knowledge, developed through the past 15 years on college campuses around the country, that documents the benefits of the process approach.

Process-oriented writing programs share a number of basic features (King & Flitterman-King, 1986). Some combination of the following techniques and program benefits can be found in every classroom where the process model has been adopted:

1. **Increased student interest.** Students working with process approaches often seem more active and attentive than those in traditional English/language arts classes. The same holds true when these writing techniques are used in social studies, math, or science. Students are active writers, responders, and collaborators, rather than listening recipients of textbook-based information.

2. **Development of each writer's voice.** First experiences with the process approach can help students overcome the anxiety often associated with writing. After one or two class periods of listening to each other, they also begin to abandon their reticence about reading their work aloud. Within such a framework of acceptance, students can begin to find individual writing voices, and assuming honest effort, the particular styles they develop tend to be lively and energetic.

"NCTE commissions cite an old-fashioned view of language teaching, still held by large and influential segments of the American public, as presenting the greatest obstacle to the process writing approach. This limited view of language tends to retard classroom application of new knowledge from research, and weakens teacher education and staff development efforts."

3. **Writing, thinking, and learning across the curriculum.** Development of supportive interrelationships among reading, writing, thinking, and talking is the major benefit of using the process approach in any subject area. Students in math, science, and other disciplines keep written records of their thinking as they work to understand a particular situation, concept, or theorem. These problem-solving notebooks, or "learning logs," help students deal with difficult material. The logs occasion not only deep and careful thought about content, but also a clearer perception of what is known and what remains to be learned.

It has been suggested in many publications, including this one, that the computer and text processing/analysis programs can provide powerful support for the process approach to writing instruction. Primarily through the energies of graduate students producing doctoral dissertations and that of computer literate college composition teachers, the beginnings of a body of research literature on computing and composing has developed. Gail Hawisher (1986), in her meta-analysis of 24 writing and word processing studies completed since 1981, reports that despite the dissimilarities of subjects, research methodologies, and analysis tools, a tentative conclusion has emerged from this body of literature. Her conclusion is that "most writers—regardless of age or status—enjoy writing with computers and perceive word processing as a boon to their composing strategies." Not an earth-shaking statement, perhaps, but a beginning.

She goes on to suggest issues for future study, some of which might be taken up by The Johns Hopkins University over the next three years. The university's Center for Social Organization of Schools provided this country's first comprehensive look at instructional uses of computers in schools. Under the direction of Henry Jay Becker, the center completed two national surveys in 1983 and 1985 that sampled over 2,300 elementary and secondary schools in each of those years. Recently the university's

Center for Research on Elementary and Middle Schools announced a new cooperative research project: The National Field Studies of Instructional Uses of School Computers. During 1988-89, the project will examine computer use for improving student writing and has invited the collaboration of university researchers for the first time, along with district administrators and classroom teachers.

Although research at colleges and universities contributes clear data on effective ways to teach writing, the number of teachers who use a process approach falls short of the majority. Some sources estimate that fewer than 20% of practicing English teachers have received training in process approaches to teaching writing, even though such training opportunities are available through regional National Writing Project summer workshops and a proliferation of college and university programs such as those offered by Bard College's Institute for Writing and Thinking in Annandale-on-Hudson, New York.

Why then are so many teachers not practicing process approaches? Perhaps the greatest obstacle is the old-fashioned concept of English and the language arts held by large and influential segments of the American public. This is the consensus of the *1986 Report on Trends and Issues* from the six commissions of the National Council of Teachers of English. The commissions, made up of teachers and professors of English at all levels of education, monitor developments in the English curriculum and in the teaching of reading, literature, composition, the English language, and media (including computers). The NCTE commissions cite narrow curriculum mandates for "basic skills" and standardized testing, which focuses on such skills, as serious obstacles to higher learning today. The commissions attribute these problems to a belief on the part of the public and educational policy makers that studying the English language arts is simply a matter of learning to recognize words on a page and to use "correct" forms in writing and speaking. This limited view of language, a subject central to all learning, commissioners say, tends to retard the classroom application of new knowledge from research. It weakens teacher education and staff development efforts.

It appears that until the evidence is overwhelmingly conclusive that the process approach to teaching writing that appropriately incorporates word processing does, in fact, improve students' writing skills, this "limited view of language" may prevail. University researchers and classroom teachers need to work cooperatively to contribute to that evidence.

If you have any reactions to issues addressed in this column, please direct them to Anne Auten, P.O. 5017, College of St. Thomas, 2115 Summit Avenue, St. Paul, MN 55102. ■

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The Writer Emeritus Project

Lori Madian and Bruce Fleury

In the Writer Emeritus Project, expert retired writers advise and assist young writers with the development of ideas and content in their writing. Electronic communication enables the interaction between students and the Writer Emeritus.

One of the major insights of the revolution in teaching writing as a process is the importance of multiple revisions that get students interacting with others about their writing.

At Magnolia School in San Diego, CA, the revision and editing stages of the writing process take on new meaning. Through electronic communication, retired professional writers help young writers with the content of their writing and the development of their ideas. The goal of the program—to enable and encourage interaction between young writers and expert writers. This writing program is known as the Writer Emeritus Project.

In this project students use a computer for writing and save their work on disk as word processing files. These word processing files are then sent via modem to a Writer Emeritus. The Writer Emeritus comments on the young writer's development of ideas and content and makes the student aware of successes and problems. The word processing files, which now contain both the student's writing and the comments of the Writer Emeritus, are then returned to the writing student via modem. The student considers the comments in revising the original draft on the computer and then eagerly returns the revision to the Writer Emeritus for post-writing confirmation.

Below is an excerpt from a 5th grade student's original writing (the sentences have been numbered to facilitate communication):

> ... 15 Every day Rena looks out of the window and does a good deed. 16 A month after she saved *Bobbys life she made a *saftey *teem. 17 Soon Rena *past away and everyone in the club remembered her and kept the club alive. 18 Rena's name is now in the *Guiniss Book of World *Recard for saving people.

Here is the Writer Emeritus' response:

> **YOU HAVE A FEW MISSPELLED WORDS. I MARKED THEM WITH A STAR *. YOU WILL NEED TO LOOK THEM UP IN YOUR DICTIONARY.**

The Writer Emeritus focuses briefly on surface editing and moves quickly to the young writer's content and development of ideas:

> **EVERY STORY MUST HAVE A GOOD BEGINNING, A GOOD MIDDLE, AND A GOOD ENDING. YOUR STORY HAS A GOOD BEGINNING (IT GOT ME INTERESTED). YOUR STORY HAS A GOOD MIDDLE (IT KEPT ME READING TO SEE WHAT WAS GOING TO HAPPEN). HOWEVER, YOU DON'T HAVE A GOOD ENDING. AS A READER, I WANT TO KNOW WHAT KIND OF GOOD DEEDS SHE DID. WHAT WAS SO UNUSUAL THAT SHE MADE THE GUINESS BOOK OF WORLD RECORDS?**

Below is the student's revised version written from the suggestions of the Writer Emeritus:

> Almost every day Rena looks out of the window and does a good deed. A month after she saved Bobby's life she made a safety team. Soon Rena passed away and everyone in the club remembered her and kept the club alive. Rena's name is now in the Guiness Book of World Records for saving Bobby's life more times than anyone's life had ever been saved and having the most bad luck in the entire world.

A 4th grade student wrote the following passage:

10 They had a dog that died when they got done. 11 The cat was ok too. 12 The boy who called the police was hero."

The Writer Emeritus commented on the content and development of ideas like this:

WHY DID THE DOG DIE? THINK ABOUT WHY THE BOY WAS A HERO. WHO CALLED THE FIRE DEPARTMENT?

The student revised acccording to the Writer Emeritus' comments:

Everybody was ok, including their cat, but their dog died because he breathed in too much smoke. The boy who called the fire station was a hero.

In this story, it was confusing as to whether the boy called the police or fire department. The Writer Emeritus asked the student to think about why the boy was a hero and to make this clear at the end of the story. The student realized that it was the fire department and not the police that was called and revised accordingly.

Summary

Formal evaluation of the Writer Emeritus Project lies in the future. However, certain positive outcomes are already evident:

- The project promotes the integration of the curriculum.
- Students eagerly await responses from the Writer Emeritus and read the comments as if they have received a personal letter.
- Students are making practical use of computer and communication technology.
- Because the Writer Emeritus advises but does not change a student's writing, students are free to decide how to use and develop the suggestions in their writing.
- Students are writing for an audience—a person who has demonstrated interest in their writing. ■

Vctr Voweless

Vctr Voweless is a computer bug who lives in my word processing program. He loves to write to my children. Sometimes he surprises the class with a letter or a poem, but without fail, every Monday morning there is a story for the class to read. While Vctr is a fine story writer, his spelling leaves something to be desired.

Coincidentally, the misspelled words are the spelling words of the week—without any vowels! At the beginning of the school year, we all correct the spelling together using a 25" monitor. Soon the children are paired, and in rotation they correct at the computer while the rest of the class corrects a copy of the printout at their seat using a red pencil. The children at the computer double check their corrections using a spelling checker while those at their seats use their spellers.

The next step is to have the pair of the week write a story, poem, or letter to Vctr Voweless, which must be proofread by another spelling pair before it is saved on the word processing disk where Vctr lives. Often other children will write to Vctr during open computer time or ask permission to come in at lunchtime to use the computer. Within a week each child who has written receives hidden in his desk a printout of his story with a short note from Vctr.

Sometimes the workload is a problem, but usually that's because many of the children are writing and that is what I wanted to happen so I grumble softly....

Maryann Kozikowski
Gov Wm Pitkin School
East Harford, Connecticut

INSPIRING POETRY

Jon Madian

By reading poems to students, and by providing poems for them to read, students are inspired to write. There are many patterns that can form the basis for poetry, as Kenneth Koch pointed out so effectively in **Wishes, Lies, and Dreams**. If we read children stories and poems about wishes, they will write their own books and poems:

MY THREE WISHES

I wish clay tasted like chocolate
I wish crying was laughing
I wish my baby rabbits didn't get eaten by my
neighbor's hungry kitten.

To inspire creative lies in stories and poems, read Dr. Seuss's **And to Think That I Saw It On Mulberry Street,** as well as tales of Paul Bunyon and other tall tale heroes.

MY TWO LIES

I was late to school because my house burned down
and my mother asked me to help her put out the fire.

I didn't have my homework because right
after I did it our heater broke and my dad
said we had to burn all the paper to keep us warm.
I said, "Even my math work?"
And he said, "Yes."

Dream poems are beautifully inspired from the following simple pattern:

Race cars dream of the wind in their tires
Teachers dream of the day they'll retire
Love dreams of always being together
Clouds dream of snow
Wind dreams of being a tornado

Chant Simile

Pat Swaaley, a 3rd grade teacher at Stowers Elementary School, recently combined the chant and simile patterns with wonderful results, which were handwritten, illustrated, and photocopied as an anthology.

Ting ting ting
The chain is singing
Tina

push-push-push
push the car like a elephant
Michael

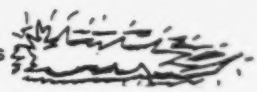
Bounce bounce bounce
My ball bounces as slow as a turtle
Ellie

Letters letters letters
Writing to my friend
Letters letters letters
Writing neat as a computer
Jennifer

Lick lick lick
I'm licking my lollipop like a hog
Marie

Cling cling cling
Goes the bells as nice as a bird
Mako

Boom boom boom
The thunder is making noises
like a snoring
Young Nim Ju



Shhhh

Sh sh sh
I am as quiet as a feather
Shhhhh
Mako

Two Patterns From Judith Viorst

The jump from chant to simile to Haiku and finally to free verse is a gradual one. There are many tried and true patterns that inspire the creative writer. These are from Judith Viorst:

I knew it was a terrible, horrible, no good,
very bad day when _____

If I were in charge of the world _____

Transformation and Other Patterns

"Hello __, Goodbye __"; "Once I was __ and now I am __"; and "The good news is __, the bad news is __" are excellent forms for writing images of transformation.

The good news is I won the lottery
The bad news is I lost my ticket

Free Verse

The movement from patterns into free verse is achieved easily if you read lots of good examples. Poems must be seen as well as heard for students to discover the elements of form. Below are two wonderful poems that were inspired by discussing how our memories are drawn to strong feelings. We closed our eyes and experienced memories and how the feelings in memories seem to be stored with visual images. Then we considered how our memories could inspire poems:

MY MOM PUTTING ON MAKEUP

I watch my mom look and stare in the mirror
She picked up a blush brush and
rubbed it in the colorful color of blush
She glided it up on her cheek bone
and I see her pick up her lipstick
of a cool color of moist lips
as she glides it on
When she put her glittering earring on
and her pretty red dress
and put her panty hose on
and her red shoes
I say to myself
"She doesn't look any prettier with it."
But she's my mom and I love her
just the way she is.

Michelle
Gr. 6, Palms School

GRANDPA

Grandpa was superman to me.
He would grab me and hug me.
And he would pick me up and throw me up.
Then he would say to me, "Fly, fly."
But one day he got sick.
He couldn't play or hug or even talk.
He would only sleep in his room.
And he got really sick and he had to go to the hospital.
It was almost Christmas but I didn't care.
I only wanted my Grandpa back now.
On Christmas he went away forever.
Now he can fly insread of me.

Allen
Gr. 6, Palms School

And to end, a romantic poem and a light poem by two Navajo high school students:

THE ROADS ARE LONG

The days and nites are lonely and the
road are a long way to get back
into each others arms.

BAGGY PANTS

Loose, floppy
flying in the
wind
Carefree, unconcerned
with the noise
I make

I like being baggy pants

[Many of the poetry patterns and examples in this article are drawn from poetry activity diskettes in the Write On! Collection from Humanities Software.] ■

The Mayflower Passenger List

Grade: 5-6

Subject: Social Studies

Objective: To assume the identity of one of the passengers on the Mayflower and write a diary entry.

Procedure:

1. Discuss and research the passage of the Mayflower.
2. Distribute the passenger list and discuss entries, focusing on the fact that these were real people with real fears, hopes, and dreams.
3. Allow students to assume the identity of one of the passengers.
4. Write a diary entry about the voyage over, the first year, the first Thanksgiving, or any other ideas suggested.
5. Students should sign their entry with the assumed name. Have each student read their entry to the class.

Besides a crew of some fifty men, Mayflower carried just over 100 passengers intending to settle in Virginia. The ship was greatly overcrowded, for she had taken on many of the original Pilgrims form Holland. Many passengers, designated as Saints, were members of a separatist religious group led by William Brewster from Scrooby and supported by recruits from nearby towns of Yorkshire and Nottinghamshire. Their praying and psalm-singing aggravated many of the Strangers, who were mostly artisans, soldiers, and servants, but by the end of the arduous voyage all were united. The survival in New England was, indeed, as hard as survival at sea, and within a year about half the colonists had died, many of the epidemic known as the "general sickness." Others returned to England years later, perhaps to their original homes, which are indicated in the following list, together with all known details of the men, women, and children who set sail in the Mayflower in 1620.

ALDEN	John	1599-1687	Harwich, Essex	Cooper. Stranger. Settled, married Priscilla Mullins
ALLERTON	Isaac	1586-1659	London	Tailor. Saint
	Mary	1588-1621	Newbury, Berks	His wife.
	Bartholomew	1612-		Son. Returned to England
	Mary	1616-1699		Daughter. Married Thomas Cushman
	Remember	1614-1655		Daughter. Married Moses Maverick
ALLERTON	John	-1621		Mariner. Died before ship returned
BILLINGTON	John	-1630	London	Stranger. Hanged for murder
	Eleanor	-1660	London	His wife
	Francis	1606-1684		Removed to Yarmouth
	John	1606-1628		Son
BRADFORD	William	1589-1657	Austerfield, Yorks.	Fustian maker. Saint
	Dorothy May	1597-1620	Wisbech, Cambs.	Wife. Drowned at Cape Cod by falling off the ship
BREWSTER	William	1566-1644	Scrooby	Saint
	Mary	1568-1627		His wife
	Love	1611-1650		Son. Married Sarah Collier
	Wrestling			Son. Died young
BRITTERIDGE	Richard	-1620	London	Stranger. Died soon after landing
BROWN	Peter	-1633	Gt. Burstead, Essex	Stranger
BUTTEN	William	1598-1620	Austerfield, Yorks.	Servant to Samuel Fuller. Died at sea
CARTIER	Robert	-1621	London	Servant to W. Mullins. Died in first winter
CARVER	John	1565-1621		Saint. First Governor
	Katherine	1580-1621		Wife
CHILTON	James	-1620	Canterbury	Tailor. Stranger
	Susanna	-1621		His wife. Married John Winslow
	Mary	1607-1679		
CLARKE	Richard	-1620	London	Stranger. Died first winter
COOKE	Francis	1583-1663	Blythe, Notts.	Woolcomber. Saint
	John	1610-1695		His son
COOPER	Humility		London	With Edward Tilley. Stranger. Returned to England

CRACKSTON	John	-1621	Colchester	Saints. Died first winter
	John	-1628		His son
DOTY	Edward	-1655	London	Servant to Hopkins.
EATON	Francis	-1633	Bristol	Carpenter and Shipwright. Stranger
	Sarah	-1621		Wife, died first winter
	Samuel	1620-		Son
ELY	—			Sailor, hired for one year
ENGLISH	Thomas	-1621		Mariner, hired for one year
FLETCHER	Moses	-1621	Sandwich, Kent	Smith, Saint, died first winter
FULLER	Edward	-1621	Redenhall, Norfs.	Stranger.
	Ann	-1621		His wife
	Samuel	-1683		Son
FULLER	Samuel	1580-1633	Redenhall	Pilgrims' physician. Saint
GARDINER	Richard		Harwich, Essex	Seaman, Stranger. Returned to England
GOODMAN	John	-1621		Linen weaver. Saint
HOLBECK	William	-1621		Servant to William White. Died first winter
HOOKE	John	-1620		Servant boy to Allerton. died of "the general sickness"
HOPKINS	Stephens	1581-1644	Wotton-under-Edge	Stranger
	Elizabeth	-1644		His wife
	Giles	1607-1690		Son by first wife
	Constance	1609-1676		Daughter by first wife
	Damaris	1617-1669		Daughter by Elizabeth
	Oceanus	1620-1621		Son born during voyage
HOWLAND	John	1592-1672	London or Essex	Servant to Carver. Married Elizabeth Tilley
LANGMORE	John	-1621	London	Servant to Martin. Died first winter
LATHAM	William			Servant boy to Carver. Returned to England. Later emigrated to Bahamas
LEISTER	Edward		London	Servant to Hopkins. Removed to Virginia
MARGESON	Edmund	-1621		Stranger. Died first winter
MARTIN —	Christopher	1575-1621	Gt. Burstead, Essex	Stranger. Treasurer of Company. Both died of sickness in first winter
	Marie			
MINTER	Desire	1600-	Norwich or Essex	With Carver family. Returned to England in 1625
MORE	Elinor	1612-1620		Assigned to Carver. Died the first winter
	Jasper	1613-1620		Assigned to Brewster. Died the December 1620
	Richard	1614-1696		Assigned to Brewster. Married Christian Hunt
	Mary	1616-1621		Assigned to Winslow. Died the first winter
MULLINS	William	1580-1621	Dorking, Surrey	Shopkeeper. Stranger
	Alice	-1621		Wife
	Joseph	1614-1621		Son. All died in first winter
	Priscilla			Daughter. Longfellow based poem on her romance with John Alden
PRIEST	Degory	-1621	London	Hatter. Saint. Died first winter
PROWER	Solomon	-1621		Stranger. Servant to Christopher Martin. Died of "general sickness"
RIGDALE	John	-1621	London	Stranger. Died of "general sickness
	Alice	-1621	London	Also died of "general sickness"
ROGERS	Thomas	-1621		Camlet merchant. Saint
	Joseph	1608-1678		Son. Removed to Eastham, 1644.
SAMPSON	Henry	-1684	London	Stranger. Came as member of Tilley family
SOULE	George	1600-1679	Eckington, Worcs.	Servant to Edward Winslow
STANDISH	Myles	1584-1656	Chorley, Lancs.	"Captain." Stranger. One of the most famous and adventurous of the Pilgrims
	Rose	-1621		His wife
STORY	Elias	-1621		Manservant to Edward Winslow
THOMPSON	Edward	-1620		Servant. Died before reaching Plymouth Harbor
TILLEY	Edward	-1621		Saint
	Agnes	-1621		His wife
	John	1573-1620	London	Saint. Silk-worker
	Joan	-1621		His wife
	Elizabeth	1606-1687		Daughter. Married John Howland
TINKER	Thomas	-1621	Leyden	Wood sawyer
	—	-1621		Wife
	—	-1621		Son. All died in first winter
TREVORE	William			Sailor. Hired to stay one year
TURNER	John	-1621	Leyden	Saint. Merchant
	—	-1621		Son
	—	-1621		Son. All died in first winter
WARREN	Master Richard	-1628	London	Merchant. Stranger. Member of exploration parties along Cape Cod. Probably Assistant Governor. Wife and daughters came later in *Anne*
WHITE	William	1592-1621		Saint. Wool carder
	Susana	1594-1680		His wife. Married secondly Edward Winslow
	Peregrine	1620-1704		Son. Born on arrival of Mayflower
	Resolved	1615-1694		Son
WILDER	Roger	-1620		Servant. Died a few days after landing
WILLIAMS	Thomas	-1620	Yarmouth, Norfs.	Stranger. Died first winter
WINSLOW	Edward	1595-1655	Droitwich, Worcs.	Saint. Printer
	Elizabeth	1597-1621	Chester or Chatham	His wife
	Gilbert	1600-1650		Brother to Edward. Stranger. Returned to England.

Donna Ardizzone
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Timely Writing Ideas

Jon Madian and Sharon Franklin

Spring is upon us with an avalanche of color and BIG WEATHER (as my grandmother used to say)! Winter is past, and the sky fills with billowy clouds. The weather changes dramatically—in some places from sun to wind to hail to sun again...in the same day! In some ways it's like fall, cold and brisk, full of freshness, sunny but often blustery.

Have your students write a comparison between spring and fall, perhaps poems one day, essays the next, and persuasive arguments on another day. "Why I'd like to have two springs and no fall" or visa versa. Have students write a 500-word nomination speech for Best Season of the Year.

Here are a few samples:

OUR MITTENS LIFT

Fall and spring flow opposite
from warm to cold, then back again
from solid ice to gushing creeks
and our mittens lift
toward our chilled cheeks

A warm sunrise sings rings of color
circles of green
on sprouting bushes and trees
in light bright fields
baby sheep
cry on knobby knees

12th grade student

SPRING CHANT

Spring spring spring
breeze singinging
whoooo whoosh
in the little leaves and branches

Drip drip trickle drip splash
the water washes over stones
and grass, splashes high
leaping gurgles
like laughter in bubble songs
the water dashes foward,
swirls,
and flows along

ACROSTIC

S ing a spring song
P rairies green with fresh grass
R umbling thunder and choruses of birds
I nvisible winds whip flowery crowns
N estling below sun streams, dancing in
G ray towering clouds

TRANSFORMATION

Ice melts into black rivers
Cold glows into warm
Heavy coats lighten into sweaters
Hot stews cool into salads
Skiing slides into baseball

HAIKU

Where snow once perched
Yellow bird twills a spring song
I stop to listen

STORY WRITING

Have your students write a story set in spring—perhaps an animal, sports, or mystery story. Explain that they must include elements of spring in their descriptions of the setting, as well as including spring in the actions, dress, or mood of the characters. For an extra challenge, have them try to include spring in the plot.

MYTHOLOGY

Suggest to your students that once upon a time there weren't four separate seasons. Oh no! Once there was only one season! It wasn't summer, winter, spring, or fall. It was a mad mixture of them all—hot one minute, freezing the next, leaves falling, then everything blooming. It was terribly hard to plan, and people never knew how to dress.

Ask your students to write a creation myth explaining how this one season ended up being the four seasons as we now know them.

A possible prompt:

"Once upon a time, before there were four seasons, everything was all mixed up together."

NOMINATE A SEASON

Have your students write and present a one-minute nomination speech for their favorite season.

WHY I NOMINATE SPRING

Of course I would nominate spring anyway because I AM tired of winter and so is everyone else. Cold gray days get tiresome, especially because you're in school and you can't go skiing and sledding every day. But I also nominate spring for its own reasons. One reason is that spring sounds so alive. There's water rushing and gushing, splashing and bubbling over the boulders, rocks, and stones in rivers and creeks. The birds are going nuts in the trees. I like spring best because of the flowers on the ground, especially all the wildflowers in the fields and in the mountains. I like the trees in spring because of the beautiful flowers, or blossoms, like the pink cherry blossoms in Japan and in Washington, DC. I've seen 'em in lots of pictures. I like the pictures of spring in Arizona, on the desert, where the cactus are flowering. Those are the reasons I nominate spring for best season of the year; those, and because spring is here, now.

9th grade student

PERSONAL JOURNAL WRITING

Discuss with your students how a spring day might be a metaphor or a symbol for an event in their own lives. Then ask them to write in their journals a description of some aspect of the season. How does an image of spring fit as a symbol of an event, feeling, or theme in their life?

SCIENTIFIC JOURNAL

Ask students to observe a natural process in their environment and record their observations over a period of time. Some possibilities: the length and direction of shadows; the time and place of the sunset; temperatures at different times of the day; or the height, width, or color of streams. Brainstorm with your students what a naturalist might choose to observe in spring.

PUBLISH ANTHOLOGIES

Since students and teachers alike are a bit tired of formal learning at this point, it's a good time to capture the bubbling energy of spring by focusing students on projects that are personal, involve social interaction, and lead to products of self-expression.

Involve students in planning the last few weeks of school. Explain that it would be nice to have some culminating events: publications, parties, plays. Suggest that students might publish individual and class collections of poems, stories, editorials, journals, and whatever else they feel is of value.

Think about having a PUBLISHING PARTY. Invite parents or other classes, serve refreshments, and let authors read from their just-published works. Decorate the walls and halls with student writings and art. Have students go in "minstral groups" to share their work with students in other classes. If students have written plays or other performables, this is the time to produce them.

And. . . here are a few specific ideas to spark the final weeks of school.

May 2 • Leonardo Da Vinci

Leonardo was born in 1452 in Italy, and died on this date in 1519. He was one of the world's most gifted artists and scientists. He kept 5,000 pages of notebooks of his thoughts, sketches, observations, and designs.

Rekindle journal writing in your class and *with* your class in honor of Leonardo. Open it up to different kinds of writing. One day you all might compose a letter that you will never send. It could be a letter to anyone--even to yourselves. On another day, pretend you are a leaf or a rock, and write from that point of view. Or try to express your feelings just in pictures—no words allowed! And on yet another day, do what Leonardo always did—write in your notebook backwards (you will have to hold your writing up to a mirror to read it).

Your class could also do some research on Leonardo—let each person share one interesting fact or accomplishment about Leonardo. Make a class mural of words and images that depict all the interesting things students discover.

May 7 • I've Got Rhythm Day

Brahms and Tchaikovsky were both born on this day—Brahms in 1833 and Tchaikovsky in 1840. Poets Robert Browning and Archibald MacLeish also have birthdays on this day. Make it a whole day of rhythm and rhyme.

Have students take notes in poetry, speak in rhyme, walk in rhythm, work to a Brahms symphony. Read some of Browning's poetry out loud.

May 9 • Peter Pan Day

Sir James M. Barrie, author of *Peter Pan,* was born on this date in 1860. After reviewing the events in the story, have students select one of the objects or animals from Peter Pan and write from its point of view. They might choose the pocket watch, alligator, gangplank, Nana, the trees, or Captain Hook's hat. Let students share their writings with the class and publish them, perhaps as part of a "Celebrating Peter Pan" mural.

May 10 • Mother's Day

The first Mother's Day was on this date in 1908. Students may want to do an acrostic poem for their mother, grandmother, or other special mother figure in their life.

M ostly takes time to listen
A lways ready for fun
R arely does she yell at me
Y es, my mom's the very best one!

You might also want to take this opportunity to think about the image of Earth as Mother. Students may enjoy making a card for this special mother, and in designing a gift—or a celebration—especially for her.

May 12 • Limerick Day

Edward Lear was born on May 12, 1812. Read aloud some of his limericks, along with some other favorites such as Shel Silverstein's. Then let students write some of their own. Remember, a limerick always has five lines: the first two lines rhyme, the third and fourth lines rhyme, and the fifth line rhymes with the first line.

May 22 • Mystery Day

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, the great mystery writer, was born on this date in 1859. Create a mystery box with book characters. Give a new clue each day for a week, and let students can guess who they think it is. Read a good mystery out loud to students—ask the librarian for a GREAT choice for your grade level.

May 25 • Africa Freedom Day

In 1963, the Organization of African Unity was founded, and many people in Africa celebrate on this day. Learn more about this day. Do some research, and perhaps invite a speaker to the class.

May 28 • Sierra Club Founded (1892)

The Sierra Club is dedicated to clean air and water, wise land use, and energy conservation. What can your class do to further the Sierra Club's goals? Have students interview people about clean air and water, and perhaps other ecological problems in your community. They may want to write a editorial on the basis of the information and opinions that they gather.

May 31 • Outdoors Day

Walt Whitman, the great American poet, was born on this day in 1819. He wrote *Leaves of Grass*, a famous book of American poetry. Listen to his poem about the outdoors:

Afoot and light-hearted I take to the open road,
Healthy, free, the world before me,
The long brown path before me leading wherever
I choose.

. . .

Now I see the secret of the making of the best
persons,
It is to grow in the open air and to eat and sleep
with the earth.

What does he mean by this? Have any of your students ever experienced the things he talks about? Let students do some writing about their most special time out of doors. Tell them to use all their senses and really make their writing "live." "What do you hear, see, smell, taste, and feel? Take your time and really go back there in your mind before you start writing." ■

The Writing Family Project

Bruce Fleury

The family as a support system for children is changing. With increasing numbers of single parent families and working couples with children, a child's schoolwork can get lost among other very real concerns.

It's important that schools find ways to reinvolve parents in their children's school work. Here's one way.

In The Writing Family project, portable computers are used in school and at home to learn and practice writing skills and techniques. The portable computer provides powerful motivation for parents to participate enthusiastically in their child's writing at home.

Step 1

Students become experts at using the computer for writing at school. The Writing Family project in San Diego, CA, uses 13 Tandy Model 100 Lap Computers and 2 printers. The Model 100 is small (about the size of a telephone book), but it is a complete, single-unit, battery-powered system that includes a full-size keyboard, screen, built-in word processing software, and 24K memory, which is more than enough for this project. It can be purchased for less than $400.

Step 2

The parent comes to school and checks out a portable computer for overnight or for the weekend.

Step 3

At home the student is the expert at using the system, and helps other family members learn to use the computer. Parents become involved in the writing, and help their child with skills such as spelling, form, style, etc. Best of all, the family writes together!

Family writing activities usually consist of letters from the family to friends, relatives, or to the teacher, as well as creative writing such as stories and poems. (Letters to the teacher always indicate enthusiasm for the project and the increased involvement of parents in their child's schoolwork.)

The final draft of everything written by the family is automatically saved in the computer's battery-powered memory.

Step 4

The parent and child return the computer to school. An enthusiastic parent-teacher discussion about the writing experience usually occurs. (This informal parent-teacher contact is very much an additional advantage.)

Step 5

At school two copies of the family's writing are printed out—one for the teacher and one for the student to take home.

Families frequently choose to write about themselves. Brian, a third grader, wrote about his dog, Smokey. Here is part of Brian's story:

```
I have a dog. His name is Smokey. He is a big dog. When he stands up he is 6 feet tall. If he gets out of the yard he won't come back for a long time. We got him when he was a puppy. Now he is 3 years old. He is a brat now. He is a big puppy. He can't wait till his birthday next month. When his birthday comes up I will give him a bone. Smokey got out Saturday and got into a fight. After that Smokey got a rope on his leg. He did not like the rope on his leg. . . .

His mother also wrote:

Dear Mr. Fleury,
  This story was written by Brian Jones and edited by Mary Lynn Jones. We spent several hours working on this story. We enjoyed having the portable computer at home to work on. Thank you for the opportunity to share this project together.
                Sincerely,
                Mary Lynn
```

Another version of this article appeared in the October 1986 issue of The Computing Teacher.

Software Review: Bank Street School Filer

This review excerpted by permission from the March 1987 issue of The Computing Teacher.

Sunburst Communications
Developed by The Bank Street College of Education and Franklin E. Smith
Grade 5–Adult
Cost: $99. Includes program and backup disk; Tutorial disk; School Data Base disk containing 27 example files and ready-to-use files; Classroom Tools disk; Reference Manual; and Teacher's Guide, including tutorials, lesson plans, and reproducible activity sheets. Lab Pack of 10 disks and Teacher's Guide: $297.
Hardware required: Apple II+ with 64K, IIe, IIc, or IIGS; or Commodore 64; one disk drive; printer recommended.
Reviewed by Kathy Pon, Miano Elementary School, Los Banos, CA.

In educational circles, there's an interesting debate among data base users. It centers around whether "canned" or pre-made data bases are a help or a hindrance to learning how to manage information. They bypass the drudgery of setting up a data base and entering information and reduce the possibility of errors or unsuccessful searches when information is entered in an inconsistent and nonusable manner. Others claim that they also bypass opportunities to actively collect information, to hand sort and categorize it, and to develop a concrete idea of what a data base can be before even touching a computer. Sunburst has addressed these issues and more with *Bank Street School Filer*.

As a K–6 computer lab teacher, I find *Bank Street School Filer* a quality tool package, especially for educators. It is packed with disks, tutorials, activities, and worksheets that fit both the novice and expert computer user's needs. As I read the documentation, played with the tutorials, walked through the starter activities, experimented with printing formats and the merging of the reports with other word processing programs, and especially as I used the software with my 4th through 6th grade computer club, it was obvious that this package had been designed for the classroom.

This package will appeal to teachers just beginning to use data bases with their students. The teacher tutorial takes you step by step through the basics of both using a data base and creating your own. This interactive tutorial disk is easy to follow with its clear prompts and opportunities to experiment with data retrieval. Suggested activities in the documentation give the instructor immediate, well planned lessons that introduce the data base in small group, whole class, or lab situations. You can read through the manual and experiment over the weekend and be ready to use it on Monday. The ample starter activities can serve as an introduction to data base management over several weeks.

Expert data base instructors will be pleased to have at their disposal well thought out, time saving student worksheets. They include a range of questions to answer, problems to solve, and "challenge" activities to pursue. The worksheets facilitate productive, open-ended inquiry, and include interesting projects in areas of the curriculum where the data base could be used as a study tool. The report capacities are as sophisticated as an *AppleWorks* data base file, yet even a 6th grader can design the report parameters to do such things as average or total the numerical fields.

Bank Street School Filer proves to be a giant among educational programs, particularly because of its 27 pre-made data bases. Topics for investigation range from dinosaurs to the Olympics, from want ads to whales. Other pre-made data bases, which can be customized for personal use by either student or teacher, include files for overdue books, school athletics and equipment, addresses, financial records, special calendar events, book reports, and notetaking.

These carefully designed mini data bases aren't meant to replace the student's experience of collecting and categorizing information, but rather to familiarize students with search and sort terms and printing commands that can be used with the files. Like students who have just learned to mix primary colors, they can then take those tools and create. Their practice with such problems becomes play and experimentation, which can lead to profound analysis of the files and possibly well founded theories about the information being studied.

In *Bank Street School Filer*, students must identify field types. As they set up their fields, they must determine the **type** of information that will be entered: number, money, data, zip code,

phone number, time, or text, for instance. Requiring students to identify fields while setting up the data base is important, because they learn that information can be classified in many ways. Later, as students enter their information, the program automatically formats the entries (e.g., 503684414 becomes (503) 686-4414).

Because of the wording of the search and sort terms, my students easily understood what their searches were finding. When looking for specific records, the students are first provided with a search sentence at the top of the screen: "Find every record where. . . ." Then a window appears on the screen for students to highlight the field name (e.g., Favorite Food) being used as criteria. After pressing RETURN, another window overlaps this one with comparison phrases such as "is/is not, is before/after, starts/ends with, contains/does not contain." After a choice is made, a third selection box appears on the screen where students can enter text for comparison (e.g., "chocolate"). Finally, a fourth box appears, allowing the students to stop or to continue with an "and" or "or." This search feature handles up to four criteria.

What's exciting about all this is that for the first time a data base program displays in clear, concrete language how to search for files and takes the abstract guesswork out of searching and sorting.

This data base also works very comfortably in a lab setting. I had each of my computer club students complete one record at their computer; these 20 students then merged their records into one file—in less than 10 minutes. The accompanying tool disk allows you to save students' reports to a disk and later print them all at once, which is helpful when there are more computers than printers. And the tool disk makes it easy to save reports to a disk and later convert them for use with a *Magic Slate* or *Bank Street Writer* file disk.

Finally, the way information appears on the screen in *Bank Street School Filer* is impressive. Record information is displayed similarly to the *AppleWorks* single record layout. Information can be positioned, one line at a time, anywhere on the screen. The program takes up to 50 fields of up to 92 characters each, in addition to one multilined, wrapped-text field in a window called "Comment."

Weaknesses

While I really couldn't find any major problems with this program, a few minor concerns did become apparent as I used it with students and other teachers. My students and I had trouble trying to delete one record from a file. We had to go through the record and erase information with the delete key, leaving the data base with a blank record that took up space. Likewise, for making corrections within a field, we used the delete key or overstrike cursor for editing—but an insert cursor or a one-stroke line deletion would be nice.

We found that if we made a mistake during a search, find, or print routine, we had to start the routine over from the beginning. And while we could view multiple records in a report format, there were times when *working* with several fields on the screen at one time would have been more efficient. The quick reference/quick start card also should have been laminated for student use; you'll need to duplicate it and do this yourself.

Summary

All in all, I'm very impressed with the product. For the first time, I see a versatile tool that I can use with my 2nd through 6th graders. I can still choose to use pencil and paper activities and set up a data base on cards as an opening lesson on data bases. But if time gets short (and it always does when you're teaching), I feel good about introducing the concept of the data base and how to make searches and sorts with the ready-made data base files that come with *Bank Street School Filer*. I know I will be able to move students through the logistics of using a data base within a couple of days using the worksheets and suggested activities in this package. Furthermore, since they will be able to grasp the commands in such a short time, I know we will be able to do a meaningful unit of study easily in a month's time.

Publishers Reply

• You *can* delete an entire record. When in browse mode, find the record you want to delete and depress Open Apple-D. Then the program will ask you to verify that you want to delete that record.

• To delete an entire line in a field, move the cursor to that field. Press the spacebar to delete the line; do not use the arrow keys.

• The best way to correct a mistake in search, find, or print is to finish answering the questions. You will then be asked if the information is correct. Type NO! You can then RETURN through the questions until you get to the item you want.

Databases for *Bank Street School Filer* include U.S., Animal Life, Endangered Species, Space, Astronomy, and the North American Databases.

Claire Kubasik
Director of Public Relations

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A Final Note. . .

In this modern world of expanding and seemingly unlimited possibilities, all progress seems to make us aware of how far we still have to go. Thus, in order to take satisfaction in our progress and not be discouraged by our unrealized potentials, we need to counsel ourselves toward patience—patience in working to bring about better educational experiences.

Every school is moved by a different combination of forces—instructional history, administrative and faculty leadership, student needs, the community, site resources, and equipment. There is no formula by which a school or class becomes more successful. Each teacher, administrator, and school must work from where he, she, or it is.

Perhaps we can be helped by considering Rainer Maria Rilke's advice in his *Letters to a Young Poet*: "Be patient with all that is unsolved in your heart and try to love the questions themselves like locked rooms and like books written in a very foreign tongue. Do not now seek the answers which cannot be given you because you would not be able to live them. And the point is, to live everything. Live the questions now. Perhaps you will then, gradually, without noticing it, live along some distant day into the answer."

Surely, if you labor to improve education, there is much that is unsolved in your heart. You have an idealism that knows how much better schooling can be. In this closing issue, the editors wish to counsel themselves, and you who labor with them to improve education, to be patient and to rejoice in living the questions. The questions contain the seeds of their answers. So live the questions fully, and gradually, through hard work, without noticing it, together we will live into the answers.

BULLETIN BOARD

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- **MECC UPDATES ODELL LAKE** — For almost a decade, life science students have been assuming the role of fish in a MECC computer simulation called "Odell Lake." Based on an actual lake in Oregon, this popular simulation has undergone a long series of developments, culminating in a new version just released by MECC. The graphics are more attractive, and the fish and other animals move on the screen in a more realistic manner. In addition, the biological model has been further enhanced, including more options and events than in previous versions. The new **Odell Lake** (No. A-191) is designed for use with students in Grades 4–6. It works with Apple II series computers with at least 64K of memory. A color monitor is recommended.

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"Letters to a Young Poet"
Rainer Maria Rilke